

THE
EXPEDITION
OF
HUMPHRY CLINKER.

BY THE
AUTHOR OF RODERIC RANDOM.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

————— *Quorsum hac tam putida tendunt,*
Furcifer? ad te, inquam —————

HOR.

VOL. I.

Cooke's Edition.



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THE BRITISH MUSEUM



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TO Mr. HENRY DAVIS,
Bookseller in London.

Abergavenny, Aug. 4.

RESPECTED SIR,

I HAVE received your esteemed favour of the 13th ultimo, whereby it appeareth, that you have perused those same Letters, the which were delivered unto you by my friend the Reverend Mr. Hugo Behn; and I am pleased to find you think they may be printed with a good prospect of success; in as much as the objections you mention, I humbly conceive, are such as may be redargued, if not entirely removed. And, first, in the first place, as touching what prosecutions may arise from printing the private correspondence of persons still living, give me leave, with all due submission, to observe, that the Letters in question were not written and sent under the seal of secrecy; that they have no tendency to the *mala fama*, or prejudice of any person whatsoever; but rather to the information and edification of mankind: so that it becometh a sort of duty to promulgate them *in usum publicum*. Besides, I have consulted Mr. Davy Higgins, an eminent attorney of this place, who, after due inspection and consideration, declareth, that he doth not think the said

letters contain any matter which will be held actionable in the eye of the law. Finally, if you and I should come to a right understanding, I do declare *in verbo sacerdotis*, that, in case of any such prosecution, I will take the whole upon my own shoulders, even *quoad* fine and imprisonment; though I must confess, I should not care to undergo flagellation: *Tam ad turpitudinem, quam ad amaritudinem pœna spectans*. Secondly, concerning the personal resentment of Mr. Justice Lismahago, I may say, *non flocci, facio*. I would not willingly villipend any christian, if, peradventure, he deserveth that epithet: albeit, I am much surpris'd that more care is not taken to exclude from the commission all such vagrant foreigners as may be justly suspected of disaffection to our happy constitution, in church and state. God forbid that I should be so uncharitable, as to affirm positively, that the said Lismahago is no better than a Jesuit in disguise; but this I will assert and maintain, *totis viribus*, that from the day he qualified, he has never been once seen *intra templi parietes*, that is to say, within the parish church.

Thirdly, with respect to what pass'd at Mr. Kendal's table, when the said Lismahago was so brutal

brutal in his reprehensions, I must inform you, my good Sir, that I was obliged to retire; not by fear arising from his minatory reproaches, which, as I said before, I value not of a rush; but from the sudden effect produced by a barbel's row, which I had eaten at dinner, not knowing that the said row is at certain seasons violently cathartic, as Galen observeth.

Fourthly, and lastly, with reference to the manner in which I got possession of these Letters, it is a circumstance that concerns my own conscience only; sufficeth it to say, I have fully satisfied the parties in whose custody they were; and, by this time, I hope, I have also satisfied you in such ways, that the last hand may be put to our agreement, and the work proceed with all convenient expedition; in which hope I rest, respected Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

JONATHAN DUSTWICH.

P. S. I propose, *Deo volente*, to have the pleasure of seeing you in the great city, towards All-hallowtide, when I shall be glad to treat with you concerning a parcel of MS. sermons of a certain clergyman deceased; a cake of the right leaven for the present taste of the public, *Verbum sapienti*, &c.

J. D.

TO THE
Rev. Mr. JONATHAN DUSTWICH,
At——.

SIR,

I RECEIVED yours in course of post, and shall be glad to treat with you for the MS. which I have delivered to your friend Mr. Behn; but can by no means comply with the terms proposed. Those things are so uncertain. Writing is all a lottery—I have been a loser by the works of the greatest men of the age—I could mention particulars, and name names; but don't chuse it—The taste of the town is so changeable. Then there have been so many letters upon travels lately published—What between Smollett's, Sharp's, Derrick's, Thicknesse's, Baltimore's, and Baretti's, together with Shandy's Sentimental Travels, the public seems to be cloyed with that kind of entertainment. Nevertheless, I will, if you please, run the risque of printing and publishing, and you shall have half the profits of the impression. You need not take the trouble to bring up your sermons on my account—Nobody reads sermons but Methodists and Dissenters. Besides, for my own part, I am quite a stranger to that sort of reading; and the two persons whose judgment I depended upon in these matters, are out of
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the way: one his gone abroad, carpenter of a man of war; and the other has been silly enough to abscond, in order to avoid a prosecution for blasphemy—I'm a great loser by his going off. He has left a manual of devotion half finished on my hands, after having received money for the whole copy. He was the soundest divine, and had the most orthodox pen of all my people; and I never knew his judgment fail, but in flying from his bread and butter on this occasion.

By owning you was not put in bodily fear by Lismahago, you preclude yourself from the benefit of a good plea, over and above the advantage of binding him over. In the late war, I inserted in my evening paper, a paragraph that came by the post, reflecting upon the behaviour of a certain regiment in battle. An officer of said regiment came to my shop, and, in the presence of my wife and journeymen, threatened to cut off my ears. As I exhibited marks of bodily fear, more ways than one, to the conviction of the by-standers, I bound him over; my action lay, and I recovered. As for flagellation, you have nothing to fear, and nothing to hope, on that head. There has been but one printer flogged

ged at the cart's tail these thirty years; that was Charles Watson; and he assured me it was no more than a flea-bite. C—S— has been threatened several times by the house of L——; but it came to nothing. If an information should be moved for, and granted against you, as the editor of those letters, I hope you will have honesty and wit enough to appear and take your trial. If you should be sentenced to the pillory, your fortune is made—As times go, that's a sure step to honour and preferment. I shall think myself happy if I can lend you a lift; and am very sincerely,

Yours,

London, Aug. 10th.

HENRY DAVIS.

Please my kind service to your neighbour, my cousin Maddoc. I have sent an Almanack and Court-kalendar, directed for him at Mr. Sutton's, bookseller, in Gloucester, carriage paid, which he will please to accept as a small token of my regard. My wife, who is very fond of toasted cheese, presents her compliments to him, and begs to know if there's any of that kind which he was so good as to send us last Christmas, to be sold in London.

H. D.

THE
EXPEDITION
OF
HUMPHRY CLINKER.

To Dr. Lewis.

Doctor,

THE pills are good for nothing; I might as well swallow snow-balls to cool my reins. I have told you over and over how hard I am to move; and, at this time of day, I ought to know something of my own constitution. Why will you be so positive? Pr'ythee send me another prescription. I am as lame and as much tortured in all my limbs as if I was broke upon the wheel. Indeed, I am equally distressed in mind and body. As if I had not plagues enough of my own, those children of my sister are left me for a perpetual source of vexation. What business have people to get children to plague their neighbours? A ridiculous incident, that happened yesterday to my niece Liddy, has disordered me in such a manner, that I expect to be laid up with another fit of the gout. Perhaps I may explain myself in my next. I shall set out to-morrow morning for the Hot Well at Bristol; where, I am afraid, I shall stay longer than I could wish. On the receipt of this, send Williams thither, with my saddle-horse and the *demi pique*. Tell Barns to thresh out the two old ricks, and send the corn to market, and sell it off to the poor at a shilling a bushel under market-price. I have received a snivelling letter from Griffin, offering to make a public submission, and pay costs. I want none of his submissions; neither will I pocket any of his money. The fellow is a bad neighbour, and I desire to have nothing to do

do with him: but as he is purse-proud, he shall pay for his insolence. Let him give five pounds to the poor of the parish, and I will withdraw my action; and, in the mean time, you may tell Prig to stop proceedings. Let Morgan's widow have the Alderney cow, and forty shillings to cloath her children; but do not say a syllable of the matter to any living soul: I will make her pay when she is able. I desire you will lock up all my drawers, and keep the keys till meeting; and be sure you take the iron-chest with my papers into your own custody. Forgive all this trouble from, dear Lewis, your affectionate

Gloucester, April 2.

M. Bramble.

To Mrs. Gwyllim, Housekeeper at Brambleton-Hall.

Mrs. Gwyllim,

WHEN this cums to hand, be sure to pack up in the trunk male that stands in my closet, to be sent me in the Bristol waggon without loss of time, the following articles, viz. my rose-collard neglejay, with green robins; my yellow damask, and my black velvet suit, with the short hoop; my bloo quilted petticoat; my green manteel; my laced apron; my French commode; Macklin head and lappets; and the litel box with my jowls. Williams may bring over my bum-daffee, and the viol with the easings of Dr. Hill's dock-water, and Chowder's lackstiff. The poor creature has been terribly constuprated ever since we left huom. Pray take particular care of the house while the family is absent. Let there be a fire constantly kept in my brother's chamber and mine. The maids, having nothing to do, may be set a spinning. I desire you'll clap a pad-luck on the wind-seller, and let none of the men have excess to the strong beer. Don't forget to have the gate shit every evening before dark. The gardnir
and

and the hind may lie below in the landry, to partake the house, with the blunderbuss and the great dog; and I hope you'll have a watchful eye over the maids. I know that hussy, Mary Jones, loves to be rumping with the men. Let me know if Alderney's calf be fould yet, and what he fought; if the ould goose be sitting; and if the cobbler has cut Dicky, and how the poor anemil bore the operation. No more at present; but rests, yours,

Glostar, April 2.

Tabitha Bramble.

To Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton-Hall.

Dear Molly,

HEAVING this importunity, I send my love to you and Saul, being in good health, and hoping to hear the same from you; and that you and Saul will take my poor kitten to bed with you this cold weather. We have been all in a sad taking here at Glostar. Miss Liddy had like to have run away with a player-man, and young master and he would adone themselves a mischief; but the squire applied to the mare, and they were bound over. Mistress bid me not speak a word of the matter to any Christian soul: no more I shall; for we servints should see all and say nothing. But, what was worse than all this, Chowder has had the misfortune to be worried by a butcher's dog, and came home in a terrible pickle. Mistress was taken with the asterisks; but they soon went off. The doctor was sent for to Chowder, and he subscribed a repository, which did him great service. Thank God, he is now in a fair way to dowell. Pray take care of my box and the pillyber, and put them under your own bed; for, I do suppose, Madam Gwyllim will be a prying into my secrets now my back is turned. John Thomas is in good health, but sulky. The squire gave away an ould coat to a poor man; and John says as how 'tis robbing him of his parquissites. I told him, by his agreement, he was to receive no vails; but he says as how there's a difference

a difference betwixt vails and parquifites; and fo there is for fartain. We are all going to the Hot Well; where I shall drink your health in a glafs of water; being, dear Molly, your humble fervant to command,

W. Jenkins.

Gloſtar, April 2.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, Bart. of Jeſus College, Oxon.

Dear Phillips,

As I have nothing more at heart than to convince you I am incapable of forgetting or neglecting the frienſhip I made at college, I now begin that correſpondence by letters which you and I agreed, at parting, to cultivate. I begin it ſooner than I intended, that you may have it in your power to refute any idle reports which may be circulated to my prejudice at Oxford, touching a fooliſh quarrel, in which I have been involved on account of my ſiſter, who had been ſome time ſettled here in a boarding-school. When I came hither with my uncle and aunt (who are our guardians) to fetch her away, I found her a fine, tall girl, of ſeventeen, with an agreeable perſon; but remarkably ſimple, and quite ignorant of the world. This diſpoſition, and want of experience, had expoſed her to the addreſſes of a perſon (I know not what to call him) who had ſeen her at a play; and, with a confidence and dexterity peculiar to himſelf, found means to be recommended to her acquaintance. It was by the greateſt accident I intercepted one of his letters. As it was my duty to ſtifle this correſpondence in its birth, I made it my buſineſs to find him out, and tell him very freely my ſentiments of the matter. The ſpark did not like the ſtile I uſed, and behaved with abundance of mettle. Though his rank in life (which, by the bye, I am aſhamed to declare) did not entitle him to much deference; yet, as his behaviour was remarkably ſpirited, I admitted him to the privilege of a gentleman; and ſomething might have happened

happened, had not we been prevented. In short, the business took air, I know not how, and made abundance of noise. Recourse was had to justice: I was obliged to give my word and honour, &c. and to-morrow morning we set out for Bristol Wells, where I expect to hear from you by the return of the post. I have got into a family of originals, whom I may one day attempt to describe for your amusement. My aunt, Mrs. Tabitha Bramble, is a maiden of forty-five, exceedingly starched, vain, and ridiculous. My uncle is an odd kind of humorist, always on the fret, and so unpleasant in his manner, that, rather than be obliged to keep him company, I would resign all claim to the inheritance of his estate. Indeed, his being tortured by the gout may have soured his temper; and, perhaps, I may like him better on further acquaintance. Certain it is, all his servants and neighbours in the country are fond of him, even to a degree of enthusiasm; the reason of which I cannot as yet comprehend. Remember me to Griffy Price, Gwyn, Mansel, Bassett, and all the rest of my old Cambrian companions. Salute the bed-maker in my name; give my service to the cook; and, pray, take care of poor Ponto, for the sake of his old master; who is, and ever will be, dear Philips, your affectionate friend, and humble servant,

Gloucester, April 2.

Jér. Melford.

To Mrs. Jermyn, at her House in Gloucester.

Dear Madam,

HAVING no mother of my own, I hope you will give me leave to disburden my poor heart to you, who have always acted the part of a kind parent to me, ever since I was put under your care. Indeed, and indeed, my worthy governess may believe me, when I assure her, that I never harboured a thought that was otherwise than virtuous; and, if God will give me grace, I shall never behave so as to cast a

reflection on the care you have taken in my education. I confess I have given just cause of offence by my want of prudence and experience. I ought not to have listened to what the young man said; and it was my duty to have told you all that passed; but I was ashamed to mention it: and then he behaved so modest and respectful, and seemed to be so melancholy and timorous, that I could not find in my heart to do any thing that should make him miserable and desperate. As for familiarities, I do declare, I never once allowed him the favour of a salute; and as to the few letters that passed between us, they are all in my uncle's hands; and I hope they contain nothing contrary to innocence and honour. I am still persuaded that he is not what he appears to be: but time will discover. Meanwhile, I will endeavour to forget a connexion which is so displeasing to my family. I have cried without ceasing, and have not tasted any thing but tea, since I was hurried away from you; nor did I once close my eyes for three nights running. My aunt continues to chide me severely when we are by ourselves; but I hope to soften her in time by humility and submission. My uncle, who was so dreadfully passionate in the beginning, has been moved by my tears and distress, and is now all tenderness and compassion; and my brother is reconciled to me, 'on my promising to break off all correspondence with that unfortunate youth: but, notwithstanding all their indulgence, I shall have no peace of mind till I know my dear and ever-honoured governess has forgiven her poor, disconsolate, forlorn, affectionate, humble servant, till death,

Clifton, April 6.

Lydia Melford.

To Miss Lætitia Willis, at Gloucester.

My dearest Letty,

I AM in such a fright, lest this should not come safe to hand by the conveyance of Jarvis the carrier,
that

that I beg you will write me on the receipt of it, directing to me, under cover, to Mrs. Winifred Jenkins, my aunt's maid, who is a good girl, and has been so kind to me in my affliction, that I have made her my confidante. As for Jarvis, he was very shy of taking charge of my letter and the little parcel, because his sister Sally had like to have lost her place on my account. Indeed, I cannot blame the man for his caution, but I have made it worth his while. My dear companion and bed-fellow, it is a grievous addition to my other misfortunes that I am deprived of your agreeable company and conversation, at a time when I need so much the comfort of your good humour and good sense: but, I hope, the friendship we contracted at boarding-school will last for life. I doubt not but on my side it will daily increase and improve, as I gain experience, and learn to know the value of a true friend. O my dear Letty! what shall I say about poor Mr. Wilton! I have promised to break off all correspondence, and, if possible, to forget him; but, alas! I begin to perceive that will not be in my power. As it is by no means proper that the picture should remain in my hands, lest it should be the occasion of more mischief, I have sent it to you by this opportunity, begging you will either keep it safe till better times, or return it to Mr. Wilton himself, who, I suppose, will make it his business to see you at the usual place. If he should be low-spirited at my sending back his picture, you may tell him I have no occasion for a picture, while the original continues engraved on my—. But, no! I would not have you tell him that neither, because there must be an end of our correspondence. I wish he may forget me, for the sake of his own peace; and yet, if he should, he must be a barbarous—. But it is impossible! Poor Wilton cannot be false and inconstant! I beseech him not to write to me, nor attempt to see me for some time; for, considering the resentment and

passionate temper of my brother Jerry, such an attempt might be attended with consequences which would make us all miserable for life. Let us trust to time and the chapter of accidents; or rather to that Providence which will not fail, sooner or later, to reward those that walk in the paths of honour and virtue. I would offer my love to the young ladies; but it is not fit that any of them should know you have received this letter. If we go to Bath, I shall send you my simple remarks upon that famous centre of polite amusement, and every other place we may chance to visit; and I flatter myself that my dear Miss Willis will be punctual in answering the letters of her affectionate

Clifton, April 6.

Lydia Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Lewis,

I HAVE followed your directions with some success, and might have been upon my legs by this time, had the weather permitted me to use my saddle-horse. I rode out upon the Downs last Tuesday, in the forenoon, when the sky, as far as the visible horizon, was without a cloud; but before I had gone a full mile, I was overtaken instantaneously by a storm of rain that wet me to the skin in three minutes. Whence it came the devil knows; but it has laid me up, I suppose, for one fortnight. It makes me sick to hear people talk of the fine air upon Clifton Downs. How can the air be either agreeable or salutary, where the dæmon of vapours descends in a perpetual drizzle? My confinement is the more intolerable, as I am surrounded with domestic vexations. My niece has had a dangerous fit of illness, occasioned by that cursed incident at Gloucester, which I mentioned in my last. She is a poor good-natured simpleton, as soft as butter, and as easily melted: not that she is a fool; the girl's parts are not despicable, and her education has not been neglected;

lected; that is to say, she can write and spell, and speak French, and play upon the harpsichord; then she dances finely, has a good figure, and is very well inclined; but she is deficient in spirit, and so susceptible, and so tender, forsooth! Truly, she has got a languishing eye, and reads romances. Then there is her brother, Squire Jerry, a pert jackanapes, full of college petulance and self-conceit; proud as a German count, and as hot and hasty as a Welch mountaineer. As for that fantastical animal my sister Tabby, you are no stranger to her qualifications. I vow to God, she is sometimes so intolerable, that I almost think she is the devil incarnate come to torment me for my sins; and yet I am conscious of no sins that ought to entail such family-plagues upon me. Why the devil should not I shake off these torments at once? I an't married to Tabby, thank Heaven! nor did I beget the other two. Let them chuse another guardian: for my part, I an't in a condition to take care of myself, much less to superintend the conduct of giddy-headed boys and girls. You earnestly desire to know the particulars of our adventure at Gloucester; which are briefly these, and I hope they will go no farther. Liddy had been so long cooped up in a boarding-school, which, next to a nunnery, is the worst kind of seminary that ever was contrived for young women, that she became as inflammable as touch-wood; and going to a play in holiday-time—Sdeath! I am ashamed to tell you!—she fell in love with one of the actors, a handsome young fellow, that goes by the name of Wilson. The rascal soon perceived the impression he had made; and managed matters so as to see her at a house where she went to drink tea with her governess. This was the beginning of a correspondence which they kept up by means of a jade of a milliner, who made and dressed caps for the girls at the boarding-school. When we arrived at Gloucester,

Liddy came to stay at lodgings with her aunt, and Wilson bribed the maid to deliver a letter into her own hands; but it seems Jerry had already acquired so much credit with the maid, (by what means he best knows,) that she carried the letter to him; and so the whole plot was discovered. The rash boy, without saying a word of the matter to me, went immediately in search of Wilson; and, I suppose, treated him with insolence enough. The theatrical hero was too far gone in romance to brook such usage: he replied in blank verse, and a formal challenge ensued. They agreed to meet early next morning, and decide the dispute with sword and pistol. I heard nothing at all of the affair, till Mr. Morley came to my bed-side in the morning, and told me he was afraid my nephew was going to fight, as he had been over-heard talking very loud and vehement with Wilson at the young man's lodging the night before, and afterwards went and bought powder and ball at a shop in the neighbourhood. I got up immediately; and, upon enquiry, found he was just gone out. I begged Morley to knock up the mayor, that he might interpose as a magistrate; and in the mean time I hobbled after the squire, whom I saw at a distance walking at a great pace towards the city-gate. In spite of all my efforts, I could not come up till our two combatants had taken their ground, and were priming their pistols. An old house luckily screened me from their view; so that I rushed upon them at once, before I was perceived. They were both confounded, and attempted to make their escape different ways; but Morley coming up with constables at that instant, took Wilson into custody, and Jerry followed him quietly to the mayor's house. All this time I was ignorant of what had passed the preceding day; and neither of the parties would discover a tittle of the matter. The mayor observed that it was great presumption in Wilson, who

who was a stroller, to proceed to such extremities with a gentleman of family and fortune; and threatened to commit him on the vagrant act. The young fellow buffled up with great spirit, declaring he was a gentleman, and would be treated as such: but he refused to explain himself farther. The master of the company being sent for, and examined touching the said Wilson, said, the young man had engaged with him at Birmingham about six months ago, but never would take his salary; that he had behaved so well in his private character, as to acquire the respect and good-will of all his acquaintance; and that the public owned his merit, as an actor, was altogether extraordinary. After all, I fancy, he will turn out to be a run-away 'prentice from London. The manager offered to bail him for any sum, provided that he would give his word and honour that he would keep the peace: but the young gentleman was on his high ropes, and would by no means lay himself under any restrictions. On the other hand, Hopeful was equally obstinate; till at length the mayor declared, that, if they both refused to be bound over, he would immediately commit Wilson as a vagrant to hard labour. I own I was much pleased with Jerry's behaviour on this occasion: he said, that, rather than Mr. Wilson should be treated in such an ignominious manner, he would give his word and honour to prosecute the affair no further while they remained at Gloucester. Wilson thanked him for his generous manner of proceeding, and was discharged. On our return to our lodgings, my nephew explained the whole mystery; and I own I was exceedingly incensed. Liddy being questioned on the subject, and very severely reproached by that wild-cat my sister Tabby, first swooned away; then, dissolving in a flood of tears, confessed all the particulars of the correspondence; at the same time giving up three letters, which was all she had received

ceived from her admirer. The last, which Jerry intercepted, I send you inclosed; and when you have read it, I dare say you will not wonder at the progress the writer had made in the heart of a simple girl, utterly unacquainted with the characters of mankind. Thinking it was high time to remove her from such a dangerous connexion, I carried her off the very next day to Bristol: but the poor creature was so frightened and fluttered by our threats and expostulations, that she fell sick the fourth day after our arrival at Clifton; and continued so ill for a whole week, that her life was despaired of. It was not till yesterday that Dr. Rigge declared her out of danger. You cannot imagine what I have suffered, partly from the indiscretion of this poor child, but much more from the fear of losing her entirely. This air is intolerably cold, and the place quite solitary. I never go down to the Well without returning low-spirited; for there I meet with half a dozen poor emaciated creatures, with ghostly looks, in the last stage of a consumption, who have made shift to linger through the winter, like so many exotick plants languishing in a hot-house; but, in all appearance, will drop into their graves before the sun has warmth enough to mitigate the rigour of this ungenial spring. If you think the Bath water will be of any service to me, I will go thither as soon as my niece can bear the motion of the coach. Tell Barns I am obliged to him for his advice, but do not chuse to follow it. If Davis voluntarily offers to give up the farm, the other shall have it: but I will not begin at this time of day to distress my tenants, because they are unfortunate, and cannot make regular payments. I wonder that Barns should think me capable of such oppression. As for Higgins, the fellow is a notorious poacher, to be sure; and an impudent rascal to set his snares in my own paddock: but, I suppose, he thought he had some right (especially in my absence)

to

to partake of what Nature seems to have intended for common use. You may threaten him, in my name, as much as you please; and if he repeats the offence, let me know it before you have recourse to justice. I know you are a great sportsman, and oblige many of your friends: I need not tell you to make use of my grounds; but it may be necessary to hint, that I am more afraid of my fowling-piece than of my game. When you can spare two or three brace of partridges, send them over by the stage-coach; and tell Gwyllim that she forgot to pack up my flannels and wide shoes in the trunk-mail. I shall trouble you, as usual, from time to time; till at last, I suppose, you will be tired of corresponding with your assured friend,

Clifton, April 17.

M. Bramble.

To Miss Lydia Melford.

Miss Willis has pronounced my doom! You are going away, dear Miss Melford! you are going to be removed, I know not whither! What shall I do? Which way shall I turn for consolation? I know not what I say! All night long have I been tossed in a sea of doubts and fears, uncertainty and distraction, without being able to connect my thoughts, much less to form any consistent plan of conduct. I was even tempted to wish that I had never seen you; or that you had been less amiable, or less compassionate to your poor Wilton: and yet it would be detestable ingratitude in me to form such a wish, considering how much I am indebted to your goodness, and the ineffable pleasure I have derived from your indulgence and approbation. Good God! I never heard your name mentioned without emotion! The most distant prospect of being admitted to your company, filled my whole soul with a kind of pleasing alarm! As the time approached, my heart beat with redoubled force, and every nerve thrilled with a transport of expectation:

but

but when I found myself actually in your presence—when I heard you speak—when I saw you smile—when I beheld your charming eyes turned favourably upon me—my breast was filled with such tumults of delight, as wholly deprived me of the power of utterance, and wrapped me in a delirium of joy! Encouraged by your sweetness of temper and affability, I ventured to describe the feelings of my heart. Even then you did not check my presumption; you pitied my sufferings, and gave me leave to hope—you put a favourable, perhaps too favourable, construction on my appearance. Certain it is, I am no player in love. I speak the language of my own heart, and have no prompter but nature. Yet there is something in this heart, which I have not yet disclosed. I flattered myself—But, I will not—I must not proceed. Dear Miss Liddy! for Heaven's sake, contrive, if possible, some means of letting me speak to you before you leave Gloucester;—otherwise, I know not what will—But I begin to rave again—I will endeavour to bear this trial with fortitude. While I am capable of reflecting upon your tenderness and truth, I surely have no cause to despair; yet I am strangely affected. The sun seems to deny me light, a cloud hangs over me, and there is a dreadful weight upon my spirits! While you stay in this place, I shall continually hover about your lodgings, as the parted soul is said to linger about the grave where it's mortal comfort lies. I know, if it is in your power, you will task your humanity—your compassion—shall I add, your affection?—in order to assuage the almost intolerable disquiet that torments the heart of your afflicted

Gloucester, March 31.

Wilson.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus College, Oxon.

Dear Phillips,

Hot-Well, April 18.

I GIVE Mansel credit for his invention, in propagating the report that I had a quarrel with a mountebank's

mountebank's merry Andrew at Gloucester : but I have too much respect for every appendage of wit, to quarrel even with the lowest buffoonery ; and therefore I hope Mansel and I shall always be good friends. I cannot, however, approve of his drowning my poor dog Ponto, on purpose to convert Ovid's pleonasm into a punning epitaph : *Deerant quoque littora Ponto* ; for, that he threw him into the Isis, when it was so high and impetuous, with no other view than to kill the fleas, is an excuse that will not hold water. But I leave poor Ponto to his fate, and hope Providence will take care to accommodate Mansel with a drier death.

As there is nothing that can be called company at the Well, I am here in a state of absolute rustication. This, however, gives me leisure to observe the singularities in my uncle's character, which seems to have interested your curiosity. The truth is, his disposition and mine, which, like oil and vinegar, repelled one another at first, have now begun to mix by dint of being beat up together. I was once apt to believe him a complete Cynic ; and that nothing but the necessity of his occasions could compel him to get within the pale of society. I am now of another opinion. I think his peevishness arises partly from bodily pain, and partly from a natural excess of mental sensibility ; for, I suppose, the mind, as well as the body, is, in some cases, endued with a morbid excess of sensation.

I was the other day much diverted with a conversation that passed in the Pump-room, betwixt him and the famous Dr. L——n, who is come to ply at the Well for patients. My uncle was complaining of the stink, occasioned by the vast quantity of mud and slime, which the river leaves at low ebb under the windows of the Pump-room. He observed, that the exhalations arising from such a nuisance could not but be prejudicial to the weak lungs of many consumptive patients, who came to drink the water.

water. The doctor, overhearing this remark, made up to him, and assured him he was mistaken. He said, people in general were so misled by vulgar prejudices, that philosophy was hardly sufficient to undeceive them. Then hemming thrice, he assumed a most ridiculous solemnity of aspect, and entered into a learned investigation of the nature of stink. He observed, that stink, or stench, meant no more than a strong impression on the olfactory nerves, and might be applied to substances of the most opposite qualities; that, in the Dutch language, *stinken* signified the most agreeable perfume, as well as the most foetid odour, as appears in Van Vloundel's translation of Horace, in that beautiful ode, *Quis multa gracilis, &c.* The words *liquidis purfus odoribus*, he translates *van civet & moschata gestinken*: that individuals differed *toto cælo* in their opinion of smells, which, indeed, was altogether as arbitrary as the opinion of beauty; that the French were pleased with the putrid effluvia of animal food; and so were the Hottentots in Africa, and the Savages in Greenland; and that the Negroes on the coast of Senegal would not touch fish till it was rotten; strong presumptions in favour of what is generally called *stink*, as those nations are, in a state of nature, undebauched by luxury, unseduced by whim and caprice: that he had reason to believe the stercoraceous flavour, condemned by prejudice as a stink, was, in fact, most agreeable to the organs of smelling; for, that every person who pretended to nauseate the smell of another's excretions, snuffed up his own with particular complacency; for the truth of which he appealed to all the ladies and gentlemen then present. He said the inhabitants of Madrid and Edinburgh found particular satisfaction in breathing their own atmosphere, which was always impregnated with stercoraceous effluvia: that the learned Dr. B—, in his treatise on the Four Digestions, explains in what manner the volatile effluvia from the intestines

estines stimulate and promote the operations of the animal œconomy: he affirmed, the last Grand Duke of Tuscany, of the Medicis family, who refined upon sensuality with the spirit of a philosopher, was so delighted with that odour, that he caused the essence of ordure to be extracted, and used it as the most delicious perfume; that he himself (the doctor) when he happened to be low-spirited, or fatigued with business, found immediate relief and uncommon satisfaction from hanging over the stale contents of a close-stool, while his servant stirred it about under his nose; nor was this effect to be wondered at, when we consider that this substance abounds with the self-same volatile salts that are so greedily smelled to by the most delicate invalids, after they have been extracted and sublimed by the chymists. By this time the company began to hold their noses; but the doctor, without taking the least notice of this signal, proceeded to shew, that the many fetid substances were not only agreeable but salutary; such as *assafetida*, and other medicinal gums, resins, roots, and vegetables, over and above burnt feathers, tan-pits, candle-snuffs, &c. In short, he used many learned arguments to persuade his audience out of their senses; and from *stench* made a transition to *filth*, which he affirmed was also a mistaken idea, in as much as objects so called were no other than certain modifications of matter, consisting of the same principles that enter into the composition of all created essences, whatever they may be: that in the filthiest production of nature, a philosopher considereth nothing but the earth, water, salt, and air, of which it was compounded; that, for his own part, he had no more objection to drinking the dirtiest ditch water, than he had to a glass of water from the Hot Well, provided he was assured there was nothing poisonous in the concrete. Then addressing himself to my uncle—‘Sir,’ said he, ‘you seem to be of a dropical habit, and probably will soon have

a confirmed *ascites* : if I should be present when you are tapped, I will give you a convincing proof of what I assert, by drinking, without hesitation, the water that comes out of your abdomen.' The ladies made wry faces at this declaration ; and my uncle, changing colour, told him he did not desire any such proof of his philosophy. ' But I should be glad to know,' said he, ' what makes you think I am of a dropfical habit?'—' Sir, I beg pardon,' replied the doctor ; ' I perceive your ancles are swelled, and you seem to have the *facies leucophlegmatica*. Perhaps, indeed, your disorder may be *œdematous*, or gouty ; or it may be the *lues venerea* : if you have any reason to flatter yourself it is this last, Sir, I will undertake to cure you with three small pills, even if the disease should have attained its utmost inveteracy : Sir, it is an arcanum which I have discovered, and prepared with infinite labour. Sir, I have lately cured a woman in Bristol, a common prostitute, Sir, who had got all the worst symptoms of the disorder ; such as *nodi*, *tophi*, and *gummata verucae*, *cristæ*, *Galli*, and a *serpiginous* eruption, or rather a pocky itch all over her body. By that time she had taken the second pill, Sir, by Heaven ! she was as smooth as my hand, and the third made her as sound and as fresh as a new-born infant.'—' Sir,' cried my uncle peevishly, ' I have no reason to flatter myself that my disorder comes within the efficacy of your nostrum. But this patient you talk of, may not be so sound at bottom as you imagine.'—' I cannot possibly be mistaken,' rejoined the philosopher ; ' for I have had communication with her three times. I always ascertain my cures in that manner.' At this remark, all the ladies retired to another corner of the room, and some of them began to spit. As to my uncle, though he was ruffled at first by the doctor's saying he was dropfical, he could not help smiling at this ridiculous confession ; and, I suppose, with a view to punish this original, told him there

was

was a wart upon his nose, that looked a little suspicious. 'I do not pretend to be a judge of those matters,' said he; 'but I understand that warts are often produced by the distemper; and that one upon your nose seems to have taken possession of the very key-stone of the bridge, which I hope is in no danger of falling.' L——n seemed a little confounded at this remark, and assured him it was nothing but a common excrescence of the cuticula, but that the bones were all sound below; for the truth of this assertion he appealed to the touch, desiring he would feel the part. My uncle said it was a matter of such delicacy to meddle with a gentleman's nose, that he declined the office: upon which the doctor, turning to me, intreated me to do him that favour. I complied with his request, and handled it so roughly, that he sneezed, and the tears ran down his cheeks, to the no small entertainment of the company, and particularly of my uncle, who burst out a-laughing for the first time since I have been with him: and took notice, that the part seemed to be very tender. "Sir," cried the Doctor, "it is naturally a tender part; but, to remove all possibility of doubt, I will take off the wart this very night."

So saying, he bowed with great solemnity to all round, and retired to his own lodgings, where he applied caustic to the wart; but it spread in such a manner as to produce a considerable inflammation, attended with an enormous swelling, so that when he next appeared, his whole face was overshadowed by this tremendous nozzle; and the rueful eagerness with which he explained this unlucky accident, was ludicrous beyond all description. I was much pleased with meeting the original of a character, which you and I have often laughed at in description; and what surprizes me very much, I find the feature in the picture, which has been drawn for him, rather softened than over-charged.

As I have something else to say, and this letter has run to an unconscionable length, I shall now give you a little respite, and trouble you again by the very first post. I wish you would take it in your head to retaliate these double strokes upon your's always,

J. Melford.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus College, Oxon.
Hot Well, April, 20.

Dear Knight,

I NOW sit down to execute the threat in the tail of my last. The truth is, I am big with the secret, and long to be delivered : It relates to my guardian, who, you know, is at present our principal object in view.

The other day, I thought I had detected him in such a state of frailty, as would but ill become his years and character. There is a decent sort of a woman, not disagreeable in her person, that comes to the Well, with a poor emaciated child, far gone in a consumption. I had caught my uncle's eyes several times directed to this person, with a very suspicious expression in them ; and every time he saw himself observed, he hastily withdrew them, with evident marks of confusion. I resolved to watch him more narrowly, and saw him speaking to her privately in a corner of a walk. At length, going down to the Well one day, I met her half way up the hill to Clifton, and could not help suspecting she was going to our lodgings by appointment, as it was about one o'clock, the hour when my sister and I are generally at the Pump-room. This notion exciting my curiosity, I returned by a back way, and got unperceived into my own chamber, which is contiguous to my uncle's apartment. Sure enough, the woman was introduced, but not into his bed-chamber ; he gave her audience in a parlour ; so that I was obliged to shift my station to another

another room, where, however, there was a small chink in the partition, through which I could perceive what passed. My uncle, though a little lame, rose up when she came in, and setting a chair for her, desired she would sit down: then he asked if she would take a dish of chocolate, which she declined with much acknowledgment. After a short pause, he said, in a croaking tone of voice, which confounded me not a little—‘Madam, I am truly concerned for your misfortunes; and if this trifle can be of any service to you, I beg you will accept it without ceremony.’ So saying, he put a bit of paper into her hand, which she opened with great trepidation, exclaiming in an extasy—‘Twenty pounds! O Sir!’ and sinking down upon a settee, fainted away. Frightened at this fit, and, I suppose, afraid of calling for assistance, lest her situation should give rise to unfavourable conjectures, he ran about the room in distraction, making frightful grimaces, and at length had recollection enough to throw a little water in her face; by which application she was brought to herself; but then her feelings took another turn. She shed a flood of tears, and cried aloud—‘I know not who you are! but sure—worthy Sir!—generous Sir!—the distress of me and my poor dying child!—Oh! if the widow’s prayers—if the orphan’s tears of gratitude can aught avail—gracious Providence! Blessings! shower down eternal blessings—’ Here she was interrupted by my uncle, who muttered in a voice still more and more discordant—‘For heaven’s sake be quiet, Madam: consider—the people of the house—’death cant you—.’ All this time she was struggling to throw herself on her knees, while he seizing her by the wrists, endeavoured to seat her upon the settee, saying—‘Pry’thee—good now—hold your tongue.’ At that instant, who should burst into the room but our aunt Tabby! of all antiquated maidens the most diabolically capricious. Ever prying into other peoples’

affairs, she had seen the woman enter, and followed her to the door, where she stood listening, but probably could hear nothing distinctly, except my uncle's last exclamation; at which she bounced into the parlour in a violent rage, that dyed the tip of her nose of a purple hue: "Fie upon you, Matt!" cried she, "what doings are these, to disgrace your own character, and disparage your family?" Then, snatching the bank-note out of the stranger's hand, she went on—"How now, twenty pounds! Here is temptation with a witness!—Good woman, go about your business.—Brother, brother, I know not which most to admire; your concupiscins, or your extravagance!"—"Good God!" exclaimed the poor woman, "shall a worthy gentleman's character suffer for an action that does honour to humanity?" By this time, uncle's indignation was effectually roused. His face grew pale, his teeth chattered, and his eyes flashed: "Sister!" cried he, in a voice like thunder, "I vow to God your impertinence is exceedingly provoking!" With these words he took her by the hand, and, opening the door of communication, thrust her into the chamber where I stood, so affected by the scene, that the tears ran down my cheeks. Observing these marks of emotion,—"I don't wonder," said she, "to see you concerned at the back-slidings of so near relation; a man of his years and infirmities! These are fine doings truly! This is a rare example set by a guardian for the benefit of his pupils. Monstrous! incongruous! sophistical!" I thought it was but an act of justice to set her to rights; and therefore explained the mystery. But she would not be undeceived. "What," said she, "would you go for to offer for to arguefy me out of my senses? Did'n't I hear him whispering to her to hold her tongue! Did'n't I see her in tears? Did'n't I see him struggling to throw her upon the couch? O filthy! hideous! abominable! Child, child, talk not to me of charity. Who gives twenty pounds in charity?"

charity? But you are a stripling. You know nothing of the world. Besides, charity begins at home. Twenty pounds would buy me a compleat suit of flowered silk, trimmings and all." In short, I quitted the room; my contempt for her, and my respect for her brother, being increased in the same proportion. I have since been informed, that the person, whom my uncle so generously relieved, is the widow of an ensign, who has nothing to depend upon but the pension of fifteen pounds a year. The people of the Well-house give her an excellent character. She lodges in a garret, and works very hard at plain-work, to support her daughter, who is dying of a consumption. I must own, to my shame, I feel a strong inclination to follow my uncle's example, in relieving this poor widow; but, betwixt friends, I am afraid of being detected in a weakness, that might entail the ridicule of the company upon, dear Phillips, your's always,

J. Melford.

Direct your next to me at Bath; and remember me to all our fellow-jesuits.

To Dr. Lewis.

Hot Well, April 20.

I UNDERSTAND your hint. There are mysteries in physick, as well as in religion, which we of the prophane have no right to investigate. A man must not presume to use his reason, unless he has studied the categories, and can chop logick by mode and figure. Between friends, I think every man of tolerable parts ought, at my time of day, to be both physician and lawyer, as far as his own constitution and property are concerned. For my own part, I have had an hospital these fourteen years within myself, and have studied my own case with the most painful attention; consequently may be supposed to know something of the matter, although I have not taken regular courses of physiology, *et cetera, et cetera.*

cetera. In short, I have for some time been of opinion (no offence, dear doctor,) that the sum of all your medical discoveries amounts to this ; that the more you study, the less you know. I have read all that has been written on the Hot Wells ; and what I can collect from the whole is, that the water contains nothing but a little salt and calcareous earth, mixed in such inconsiderable proportion, as can have very little, if any, effect on the animal œconomy. This being the case, I think the man deserves to be fitted with a cap and bells, who, for such a paltry advantage as this spring affords, sacrifices his precious time, which might be employed in taking more effectual remedies, and exposes himself to the dirt, the stench, the chilling blasts, and perpetual rains, that render this place to me intolerable. If these waters, from a small degree of astringency, are of some service in the *diabetes*, *diarrhœa*, and *night-sweats*, when the secretions are too much increased, must not they do harm in the same proportion where the humours are obstructed, as in the *asthma*, *scurvy*, *gout*, and *dropsy*, ? Now we talk of the *dropsy*, here is a strange, fantastical oddity, one of your brethren, who harangues every day in the Pump-room, as if he was hired to give lectures on all subjects whatsoever. I know not what to make of him. Sometimes he makes shrewd remarks ; at other times he talks like the greatest simpleton in nature. He has read a great deal, but without method or judgment ; and digested nothing. He believes every thing he has read, especially if it has any thing of the marvellous in it ; and his conversation is a surprizing hotch-potch of erudition and extravagance. He told me the other day, with great confidence, that my case was dropsical ; or, as he called it, *leucophlegmatica* ; a sure sign that his want of experience is equal to his presumption ; for you know there is nothing analagous to the dropsy in my disorder. I wish those impertinent fellows, with their
ricketty

ricketty understandings, would keep their advice for those that ask it. *Droopy*, indeed! Sure I have not lived to the age of fifty-five, and had such experience of my own disorder, and consulted you and other eminent physicians so often and so long, to be undeceived by such a —. But without all doubt the man is mad, and therefore what he says is of no consequence. I had yesterday a visit from Higgins, who came hither under the terror of your threats, and brought me in a present a brace of hares, which he owned he took in my ground; and I could not persuade the fellow that he did wrong, or that I would ever prosecute him for poaching. I must desire you will wink hard at the practices of this rascal, otherwise I shall be plagued with his presents, which cost me more than they are worth. If I could wonder at any thing Fitzowen does, I should be surprized at his assurance in desiring you to solicit my vote for him at the next election for the county; for him, who opposed me on the like occasion with the most illiberal competition. You may tell him civilly that I beg to be excused. Direct your next for me at Bath, whither I propose to remove to-morrow; not only on my own account, but for the sake of my niece Liddy, who is like to relapse. The poor creature fell into a fit yesterday, while I was cheapening a pair of spectacles with a Jew-pedlar. I am afraid there is something still lurking in that little heart of her's, which I hope a change of objects will remove. Let me know what you think of this half-witted doctor's impertinent, ridiculous, and absurd notion of my disorder. So far from being dropical, I am as lank in the belly as a greyhound; and, by measuring my ancle with a packthread, I find the swelling subsides every day. From such doctors good Lord deliver us! I have not yet taken any lodgings in Bath; because there we can be accommodated at a minute's warning, and I shall chuse for myself. I need not say your
directions

directions for drinking and bathing will be agreeable to dear, Lewis, your's ever,

Mat. Bramble.

P. S. I forgot to tell you that my right-ankle pits; a symptom, as I take it, of it's being *œdematous*, not *leucophlegmatic*.

To Miss Letty Willis, at Gloucester.

Hot Well, April 20.

My dear Letty,

I DID not intend to trouble you again till we should be settled at Bath; but having the occasion of Jarvis, I could not let it slip, especially as I have something extraordinary to communicate. O, my dear companion! what shall I tell you? For several days past there was a Jew-looking man, that plied at the Wells with a box of spectacles; and he always eyed me so earnestly, that I began to be very uneasy. At last, he came to our lodgings at Clifton, and lingered about the door as if he wanted to speak to somebody. I was seized with an odd kind of fluttering, and begged Win to throw herself in his way; but the poor girl has weak nerves, and was afraid of his beard. My uncle, having occasion for new glasses, called him up stairs, and was trying a pair of spectacles, when the man, advancing to me, said, in a whisper—O gracious! what do you think he said?—‘I am Wilson!’ His features struck me that very moment: it was Wilson sure enough; but so disguised, that it would have been impossible to know him, if my heart had not assisted in the discovery. I was so surprized, and so frightened, that I fainted away; but soon recovered, and found myself supported by him on the chair, while my uncle was running about the room, with the spectacles on his nose, calling for help. I had no opportunity to speak to him; but our looks were sufficiently expressive. He was paid for his glasses, and went away. Then I told Win who he was, and sent
her



Allen delin.

Printed for C. Cooke, Stationer, New, April 12, 1794.

Dauidson sculp.



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her after him to the Pump-room; where she spoke to him, and begged him in my name to withdraw from the place, that he might not incur the suspicion of my uncle or my brother, if he did not want to see me die of terror and vexation. The poor youth declared, with tears in his eyes, that he had something extraordinary to communicate; and asked if she would deliver a letter to me: but this she absolutely refused, by my order. Finding her obstinate in her refusal, he desired she would tell me, that he was no longer a player, but a gentleman; in which character he would very soon avow his passion for me, without fear of censure or reproach. Nay, he even discovered his name and family; which, to my great grief, the simple girl forgot, in the confusion occasioned by her being seen talking to him by my brother; who stopped her on the road, and asked what business she had with that rascally Jew. She pretended she was cheapening a stay-hook; but was thrown into such a quandary, that she forgot the most material part of the information; and, when she came home, went into an hysterick fit of laughing. This transaction happened three days ago, during which he has not appeared; so that I suppose he is gone. Dear Letty! you see how Fortune takes pleasure in persecuting your poor friend. If you should see him at Gloucester, or if you have seen him, and know his real name and family, pray keep me no longer in suspense. And yet, if he is under no obligation to keep himself longer concealed, and has a real affection for me, I should hope he will, in a little time, declare himself to my relations. Sure, if there is nothing unsuitable in the match, they will not be so cruel as to thwart my inclinations. O what happiness would then be my portion! I cannot help indulging the thought, and pleasing my fancy with such agreeable ideas; which, after all, perhaps, will never be realized. But why should I despair? Who knows

knows what will happen? We set out for Bath to-morrow; and I am almost sorry for it, as I begin to be in love with solitude, and this is a charming romantick place. The air is so pure; the Downs so agreeable; the furze in full blossom; the ground enamelled with daisies, and primroses, and cowslips; all the trees bursting into leaves, and the hedges already cloathed with their vernal livery; the mountains covered with flocks of sheep, and tender bleating wanton lambkins, playing, frisking, and skipping, from side to side; the groves resound with the notes of the blackbird, thrush, and linnet; and all night long sweet Philomel pours forth her ravishingly delightful song. Then, for variety, we go down to *the nymph of Bristol spring*, where the company is assembled before dinner; so good-natured, so free, so easy; and there we drink the water so clear, so pure, so mild, so charmingly maukish. There the sun is so chearful and reviving; the weather so soft; the walk so agreeable; the prospect so amusing; and the ships and boats going up and down the river, close under the windows of the Pump-room, afford such an enchanting variety of moving pictures, as require a much abler pen than mine to describe. To make this place a perfect paradise to me, nothing is wanting but an agreeable companion and sincere friend; such as my dear Miss Willis hath been, and I hope still will be, to her ever-faithful

Lydia Melford.

Direct for me, still under cover, to Win; and Jarvis will take care to convey it safe. Adieu.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus College, Oxon.
Bath, April 24.

Dear Phillips,

You have, indeed, reason to be surprized, that I should have concealed my correspondence with Miss Blackerby from you, to whom I disclosed all my

my other connexions of that nature ; but the truth is, I never dreamed of any such commerce, till your last informed me that it had produced something which could not be much longer concealed. It is a lucky circumstance, however, that her reputation will not suffer any detriment, but rather derive advantage, from the discovery ; which will prove, at least, that it is not quite so rotten as most people imagined. For my own part, I declare to you, in all the sincerity of friendship, that, far from having any amorous intercourse with the object in question, I never had the least acquaintance with her person ; but, if she is really in the condition you describe, I suspect Mansel to be at the bottom of the whole. His visits to that shrine were no secret ; and this attachment, added to some good offices which you know he has done me since I left *Alma-mater*, give me a right to believe him capable of saddling me with this scandal when my back was turned. Nevertheless, if my name can be of any service to him, he is welcome to make use of it ; and if the woman should be abandoned enough to swear his bantling to me, I must beg the favour of you to compound with the parish : I shall pay the penalty without repining ; and you will be so good as to draw upon me immediately for the sum required. On this occasion, I act by the advice of my uncle ; who says I shall have good luck, if I pass through life without being obliged to make many more compositions of the same kind. The old gentleman told me last night, with great good-humour, that betwixt the age of twenty and forty, he had been obliged to provide for nine bastards, sworn to him by women whom he never saw. Mr. Bramble's character, which seems to interest you greatly, opens and improves upon me every day. His singularities afford a rich mine of entertainment. His understanding, so far as I can judge, is well cultivated : his observations on life are equally just,

pertinent, and uncommon. He affects misanthropy, in order to conceal the sensibility of a heart which is tender even to a degree of weakness. This delicacy of feeling, or foreness of the mind, makes him timorous and fearful : but then he is afraid of nothing so much as of dishonour ; and although he is exceedingly cautious of giving offence, he will fire at the least hint of insolence or ill-breeding. Respectable as he is upon the whole, I cannot help being sometimes diverted by his little distresses ; which provoke him to let fly the shafts of his satire, keen and penetrating as the arrows of Teucer. Our aunt Tabitha acts upon him as a perpetual grind-stone ; she is, in all respects, a striking contrast to her brother : but I reserve her portrait for another occasion.

Three days ago we came hither from the Hot Well, and took possession of the first floor of a lodging-house on the South Parade ; a situation which my uncle chose for its being near the bath, and remote from the noise of carriages. He was scarce warm in the lodgings, when he called for his night-cap, his wide shoes, and flannels, and declared himself invested with the gout in his right foot, though I believe it had as yet reached no farther than his imagination. It was not long before he had reason to repent his premature declaration : for our aunt Tabitha found means to make such a clamour and confusion before the flannels could be produced from the trunk, that one would have imagined the house was on fire. All this time, uncle sat boiling with impatience, biting his fingers, throwing up his eyes, and muttering ejaculations : at length he burst into a kind of convulsive laugh, after which he hummed a song ; and, when the hurricane was over, exclaimed—' Blessed be God for all things !' This, however, was but the beginning of his troubles. Mrs. Tabitha's favourite dog Chowder, having paid his compliments to
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Adams delin.

Printed for Cooke, 1794.

Johnson sculp.

a female turnspit of his own species in the kitchen, involved himself in a quarrel with no fewer than five rivals, who set upon him at once, and drove him up stairs to the dining-room door with a hideous noise: there our aunt and her woman, taking arms in his defence, joined the concert; which became truly diabolical. This fray being with difficulty suppressed, by the intervention of our own footman and the cook-maid of the house, the squire had just opened his mouth to expostulate with Tabby, when the town-waits, in the passage below, struck up their music, if music it may be called, with such a sudden burst of sound, as made him start and stare, with marks of indignation and disquiet. He had recollection enough to send his servant with some money to silence those noisy intruders; and they were immediately dismissed, though not without some opposition on the part of Tabitha, who thought it but reasonable that he should have more music for his money. Scarce had he settled this knotty point, when a strange kind of thumping and bouncing was heard right over head, in the second story, so loud and violent as to shake the whole building. I own I was exceedingly provoked at this new alarm; and, before my uncle had time to express himself on the subject, I ran up stairs to see what was the matter. Finding the room-door open, I entered without ceremony, and perceived an object which I cannot now recollect without laughing to excess; it was a dancing-master with his scholar, in the act of teaching. The master was blind of one eye, and lame of one foot, and led about the room his pupil, who seemed to be about the age of threescore, stooped mortally, was tall, raw-boned, hard-favoured, with a woollen night-cap on his head; and he had stripped off his coat, that he might be more nimble in his motions. Finding himself intruded upon by a person he did not know, he forthwith girded himself with

a long iron sword; and advancing to me, with a peremptory air, pronounced, in a true Hibernian accent—‘Mister What-d’ye-callum, by my saoul and conscience, I am very glad to see you, if you are after coming in the way of friendship; and indeed, and indeed now, I believe you are my friend sure enough, gra; though I never had the honour to see your face before, my dear; for because you come like a friend, without any ceremony at all, at all—’ I told him the nature of my visit would not admit of ceremony; that I was come to desire he would make less noise, as there was a sick gentleman below whom he had no right to disturb with such preposterous doings. ‘Why, look-ye now, young gentleman,’ replied this original, ‘perhaps, upon another occasion, I might shivilly request you to explain the maining of that hard word *prepastorous*: but there is a time for all things, honey.’ So saying, he passed me with great agility; and, running down stairs, found our footman at the dining-room door, of whom he demanded admittance to pay his respects to the stranger. As the fellow did not think proper to refuse the request of such a formidable figure, he was immediately introduced, and addressed himself to my uncle in these words: ‘Your humble servant, good Sir, I am not so *prepastorous*, as your son calls it, but I know the rules of shivility. I am a poor knight of Ireland; my name is Sir Ulic Mackilligut, of the county of Galway. Being your fellow-lodger, I am come to pay my respects, and to welcome you to the South Parade, and to offer my best services to you, and your good lady, and your pretty daughter; and even to the young gentleman your son, though he thinks me a *prepastorous* fellow. You must know I am to have the honour to open a ball next-door to-morrow with Lady Mac Manus; and being rusted in my dancing, I was refreshing my memory with a little exercise;

the overflowings of my spleen upon you, whose province it is to remove those disorders that occasioned it; and let me tell you, it is no small alleviation of my grievances that I have a sensible friend, to whom I can communicate my crusty humours; which, by retention, would grow intolerably acrimonious.

You must know, I find nothing but disappointment at Bath; which is so altered, that I can scarce believe it is the same place that I frequented about thirty years ago. Methinks I hear you say—'Altered it is, without all doubt; but then it is altered for the better: a truth which, perhaps, you would own without hesitation, if you yourself was not altered for the worse.' The reflection may, for aught I know, be just. The inconveniencies which I overlooked in the heigh-day of health, will naturally strike with exaggerated impression on the irritable nerves of an invalid, surprized by premature old age, and shattered with long suffering. But, I believe, you will not deny that this place, which Nature and Providence seem to have intended as a resource from distemper and disquiet, is become the very center of racket and dissipation. Instead of that peace, tranquillity, and ease, so necessary to those who labour under bad health, weak nerves, and irregular spirits, here we have nothing but noise, tumult, and hurry; with the fatigue and slavery of maintaining a ceremonial, more stiff, formal, and oppressive, than the etiquette of a German elector. A national hospital it may be; but one would imagine that none but lunatics are admitted; and, truly, I will give you leave to call me so, if I stay much longer at Bath. But I shall take another opportunity to explain my sentiments at greater length on this subject. I was impatient to see the boasted improvements in architecture, for which the upper parts of the town have been so much celebrated; and the other day I made a circuit of all the new buildings.

buildings. The square, though irregular, is, on the whole, pretty well laid out, spacious, open, and airy; and in my opinion, by far the most wholesome and agreeable situation in Bath, especially the upper side of it; but the avenues to it are mean, dirty, dangerous, and indirect. Its communication with the baths is through the yard of an inn, where the poor trembling valetudinarian is carried in a chair betwixt the heels of a double row of horses, wincing under the curry-combs of grooms and postilions, over and above the hazard of being obstructed, or overturned, by the carriages which are continually making their exit or their entrance. I suppose, after some chairmen shall have been maimed, and a few lives lost by those accidents, the corporation will think, in earnest, about providing a more safe and commodious passage. The Circus is a pretty bauble; contrived for shew, and looks like Vespasian's amphitheatre turned outside in. If we consider it in point of magnificence, the great number of small doors belonging to the separate houses, the inconsiderable height of the different orders, the affected ornaments of the architrave, which are both childish and misplaced, and the areas projecting into the street surrounded with iron rails, destroy a good part of its effect upon the eye; and, perhaps, we shall find it still more defective, if we view it in the light of convenience. The figure of each separate dwelling house, being the segment of a circle, must spoil the symmetry of the rooms, by contracting them towards the street-windows, and leaving a larger sweep in the space behind. If, instead of the areas and iron-rails, which seem to be of very little use, there had been a corridore, with arcades all round, as in Covent Garden, the appearance of the whole would have been more magnificent and striking: those arcades would have afforded an agreeable covered walk, and sheltered the poor chairmen and their carriages from the rain,

rain, which is here almost perpetual. At present, the chairs stand soaking in the open street, from morning till night, till they become so many boxes of wet leather, for the benefit of the gouty and rheumatic, who are transported in them from place to place. Indeed, this is a shocking inconvenience that extends over the whole city; and I am persuaded, it produces infinite mischief to the delicate and infirm: even the close chairs, contrived for the sick, by standing in the open air, have their frize linings impregnated, like so many sponges, with the moisture of the atmosphere; and those cases of cold vapour must give a charming check to the perspiration of a patient, piping hot from the Bath, with all his pores wide open.

But to return to the Circus. It is inconvenient from its situation, at so great a distance from all the markets, baths, and places of public entertainment. The only entrance to it, through Gay Street, is so difficult, steep, and slippery, that in wet weather it must be exceedingly dangerous, both for those that ride in carriages, and those that walk a foot; and when the street is covered with snow, as it was for fifteen days successively this very winter, I do not see how any individual could go either up or down, without the most imminent hazard of broken bones. In blowing weather, I am told, most of the houses on this hill are smothered with smoke forced down the chimnies by the gusts of wind reverberated from the hill behind, which (I apprehend likewise) must render the atmosphere here more humid and unwholesome than it is in the square below: for the clouds formed by the constant evaporation from the baths and rivers in the bottom, will, in their ascent this way, be first attracted and detained by the hill that rises close behind the Circus, and load the air with a perpetual succession of vapours. This point, however, may be easily ascertained by means of an hygrometer, or
a paper

a paper of salt of tartar exposed to the action of the atmosphere. The same artist who planned the Circus, has likewise projected a Crescent ; when that is finished, we shall probably have a Star ; and those who are living thirty years hence, may, perhaps, see all the signs of the Zodiac exhibited in architecture at Bath. These, however fantastical, are still designs that denote some ingenuity and knowledge in the architect ; but the rage for building has laid hold of such a number of adventurers, that one sees new houses starting up in every outlet and every corner of Bath, contrived without judgment, executed without solidity, and stuck together with so little regard to plan and propriety, that the different lines of the new rows and buildings interfere with and intersect one another in every different angle of conjunction. They look like the wreck of streets and squares disjointed by an earthquake, which hath broken the ground into a variety of holes and hillocks ; or, as if some Gothic devil had stuffed them all together in a bag, and left them to stand higgledy-piggeldy, just as chance directed. What sort of a monster Bath will become in a few years, with those growing excrescences, may be easily conceived. But the want of beauty and proportion is not the worst effect of these new mansions ; they are built so slight, with the soft crumbling stone found in this neighbourhood, that I should never sleep quietly in one of them, when it blowed (as the sailors say) a cap full of wind : and I am persuaded, that my hind, Roger Williams, or any man of equal strength, would be able to push his foot through the strongest part of their walls, without any great exertion of his muscles. All these absurdities arise from the general tide of luxury, which hath overspread the nation, and swept away all, even the very dregs of the people. Every upstart of fortune, harnessed in the trappings of the mode, presents himself at Bath,

as in the very focus of observation. Clerks and factors from the East Indies, loaded with the spoils of plundered provinces; planters, negro-drivers, and hucksters, from our American plantations, enriched they know not how; agents, commissaries, and contractors, who have fattened in two successive wars on the blood of the nation; usurers, brokers, and jobbers, of every kind; men of low birth and no breeding, have found themselves suddenly translated into a state of affluence, unknown to former ages: and no wonder that their brains should be intoxicated with pride, vanity, and presumption. Knowing no other criterion of greatness but the ostentation of wealth, they discharge their affluence, without taste or conduct, through every channel of the most absurd extravagance; and all of them hurry to Bath, because here, without any farther qualification, they can mingle with the princes and nobles of the land. Even the wives and daughters of low tradesmen, who, like shovel-nosed sharks, prey upon the blubber of those uncouth whales of fortune, are infected with the same rage of displaying their importance; and the slightest indisposition serves them for a pretext to insist upon being conveyed to Bath, where they may hobble country-dances and cotillions among lordlings, squires, counsellors, and clergy. These delicate creatures from Bedfordbury, Butcher-Row, Crutched-Friars, and Botolph-Lane, cannot breathe in the gross air of the Lower Town, or conform to the vulgar rules of a common lodging-house; the husband, therefore, must provide an entire house, or elegant apartments, in the new buildings. Such is the composition of what is called the fashionable company at Bath; where a very inconsiderable proportion of genteel people are lost in a mob of impudent plebeians, who have neither understanding nor judgment, nor the least idea of propriety

and decorum ; and seem to enjoy nothing so much as an opportunity of insulting their betters.

Thus the number of people and the number of houses continue to increase ; and this will ever be the case, till the streams that swell this irresistible torrent of folly and extravagance shall either be exhausted, or turned into other channels, by incidents and events which I do not pretend to foresee. This, I own, is a subject on which I cannot write with any degree of patience ; for the mob is a monster I never could abide, either in its head, tail, midriff, or members ; I detest the whole of it as a mass of ignorance, presumption, malice, and brutality : and, in this term of reprobation, I include, without respect to rank, station, or quality, all those of both sexes, who affect its manners, and court its society.

But I have written till my fingers are cramped, and my nausea begins to return. By your advice, I sent to London a few days ago for half a pound of gengzeng ; though I doubt much whether that which comes from America is equally efficacious with what is brought from the East Indies. Some years ago, a friend of mine paid sixteen guineas for two ounces of it ; and in six months after, it was sold in the same shop for five shillings the pound. In short, we live in a vile world of fraud and sophistication ; so that I know nothing of equal value with the genuine friendship of a sensible man ; a rare jewel ! which I cannot help thinking myself in possession of, while I repeat the old declaration, that I am, as usual, dear Lewis, your affectionate

M. Bramble.

After having been agitated in a short hurricane, on my first arrival, I have taken a small house in Milsham Street, where I am tolerably well lodged for five guineas a week. I was yesterday at the Pump-room, and drank about a pint of the water, which seems to agree with my stomach ; and to-

tomorrow

morrow morning I shall bathe, for the first time ; so that in a few posts you may expect farther trouble : meanwhile, I am glad to find that the inoculation has succeeded so well with poor Joyce, and that her face will be but little marked. If my friend Sir Thomas was a single man, I would not trust such a handsome wench in his family ; but, as I have recommended her, in a particular manner, to the protection of Lady G——, who is one of the best women in the world, she may go thither, without hesitation, as soon as she is quite recovered, and fit for service. Let her mother have money to provide her with necessaries ; and she may ride behind her brother on Bucks : but you must lay strong injunctions on Jack to take particular care of that rusty old veteran, who has faithfully earned his present ease by his past services.

To Miss Willis, at Gloucester.

Bath, April 6.

My Dearest Companion,

THE pleasure I received from your's, which came to hand yesterday, is not to be expressed. Love and friendship are, without doubt, charming passions ; which absence serves only to heighten and improve. Your kind present of the garnet-bracelets I shall keep as carefully as I preserve my own life ; and I beg you will accept, in return, of my heart housewife, with the tortoise-shell memorandum-book, as a trifling pledge of my unalterable affection.

Bath is to me a new world ; all is gaiety, good-humour, and diversion : the eye is continually entertained with the splendor of dress and equipage ; and the ear with the sound of coaches, chaise, chairs, and other carriages. *The merry bells ring round* from morn till night. Then we are welcomed by the city-waits in our own lodgings : we have music in the Pump-room every morning ; cotillions every forenoon in the rooms ; balls twice a week ; and

concerts every other night; besides private assemblies and parties without number. As soon as we were settled in lodgings, we were visited by the master of the ceremonies; a pretty little gentleman, so sweet, so fine, so civil, and polite, that in our country he might pass for the Prince of Wales: then he talks so charmingly, both in verse and prose, that you would be delighted to hear him discourse; for, you must know, he is a great writer, and has got five tragedies ready for the stage. He did us the favour to dine with us, by my uncle's invitation; and next day squired my aunt and me to every part of Bath; which, to be sure, is an earthly paradise. The Square, the Circus, and the Parades, put you in mind of the sumptuous palaces represented in prints and pictures; and the new buildings, such as Princes-Row, Harlequin's-Row, Bladud's-Row, and twenty other rows, like so many enchanted castles, raised on hanging terraces.

At eight in the morning we go in dishabille to the Pump-room, which is crowded like a Welsh fair; and there you see the highest quality and the lowest trades-folks jostling each other, without ceremony, hail-fellow well met. The noise of the music playing in the gallery, the heat and flavour of such a crowd, and the hum and buz of their conversation, gave me the head-ache and vertigo the first day; but, afterwards, all these things became familiar, and even agreeable. Right under the Pump-room windows is the King's Bath; a huge cistern, where you see the patients up to their necks in hot-water. The ladies wear jackets and petticoats of brown linen, with chip hats, in which they fix their handkerchiefs to wipe the sweat from their faces: but, truly, whether it is owing to the steam that surrounds them, or the heat of the water, or the nature of the dress, or to all these causes together, they look so flushed, and so frightful, that I always turn my eyes another way. My aunt, who
says

says every person of fashion should make her appearance in the bath, as well as in the abbey-church, contrived a cap with cherry-coloured ribbands to suit her complexion, and obliged Win to attend her yesterday morning in the water. But, really, her eyes were so red, that they made mine water as I viewed her from the Pump-room ; and as for poor Win, who wore a hat trimmed with blue, what betwixt her wan complexion and her fear, she looked like the ghost of some pale maiden, who had drowned herself for love. When she came out of the bath, she took assafœtida drops, and was fluttered all day ; so that we could hardly keep her from going into hystericks ; but her mistress says it will do her good : and poor Win curtsies with the tears in her eyes. For my part, I content myself with drinking about half a pint of the water every morning.

The pumper, with his wife and servant, attend within a bar ; and the glasses, of different sizes, stand ranged in order before them ; so you have nothing to do but to point at that which you chuse, and it is filled immediately, hot and sparkling from the pump. It is the only hot water I could ever drink without being sick. Far from having that effect, it is rather agreeable to the taste, grateful to the stomach, and reviving to the spirits. You cannot imagine what wonderful cures it performs. My uncle began with it the other day ; but he made wry faces in drinking ; and I am afraid he will leave it off. The first day we came to Bath, he fell into a violent passion ; beat two black-a-moors ; and I was afraid he would have fought with their master ; but the stranger proved a peaceable man. To be sure the gout had got into his head, as my aunt observed : but, I believe, his passion drove it away ; for he has been remarkably well ever since. It is a thousand pities he should ever be troubled with that ugly distemper ; for, when he is free from pain, he is the best-tempered man upon earth ; so gentle, so

generous, so charitable, that every body loves him; and so good to me, in particular, that I shall never be able to shew the deep sense I have of his tenderness and affection.

Hard by the Pump-room is a coffee-house for the ladies; but my aunt says young girls are not admitted, inasmuch as the conversation turns upon politics, scandal, philosophy, and other subjects above our capacity: but we are allowed to accompany them to the booksellers'-shops, which are charming places of resort; where we read novels, plays, pamphlets, and newspapers, for so small a subscription as a crown a quarter: and in these offices of intelligence (as my brother calls them) all the reports of the day, and all the private transactions of the Bath, are first entered and discussed. From the bookseller's shop, we make a tour through the milliners and toy-men; and commonly stop at Mr. Gill's, the pastry-cook, to take a jelly, a tart, or a small basin of vermicelli. There is, moreover, another place of entertainment on the other side of the water, opposite to the Grove, to which the company cross over in a boat; it is called Spring Garden; a sweet retreat, laid out in walks and ponds, and parterres of flowers; and there is a long room for breakfasting and dancing. As the situation is low and damp, and the season has been remarkably wet, my uncle will not suffer me to go thither, lest I should catch cold: but my aunt says it is all a vulgar prejudice; and, to be sure, a great many gentlemen and ladies of Ireland frequent the place without seeming to be the worse for it. They say, dancing at Spring-Gardens, when the air is moist, is recommended to them as an excellent cure for the rheumatism. I have been twice at the play; where, notwithstanding the excellence of the performers, the gaiety of the company, and the decorations of the theatre, which are very fine, I could not help reflecting, with a sigh, upon our poor homely representations

presentations at Gloucester. But this in confidence to my dear Willis. You know my heart, and will excuse its weakness.

After all, the great scenes of entertainment at Bath are the two public rooms, where the company meet alternately every evening; they are spacious, lofty, and, when lighted up, appear very striking. They are generally crowded with well-dressed people, who drink tea in separate parties, play at cards, walk or sit and chat together, just as they are disposed. Twice a week there is a ball; the expence of which is defrayed by a voluntary subscription among the gentlemen; and every subscriber has three tickets. I was there on Friday last with my aunt, under the care of my brother, who is a subscriber; and Sir Ulic Mackilligut recommended his nephew, Captain O'Donaghan, to me as a partner; but Jerry excused me himself, by saying I had got the head-ache; and, indeed, it was really so, though I cannot imagine how he knew it. The place was so hot, and the smell so different from what we are used to in the country, that I was quite feverish when we came away. Aunt says it is the effect of a vulgar constitution, reared among woods and mountains; and that, as I become accustomed to genteel company, it will wear off. Sir Ulic was very complaisant, made her a great many high-flown compliments; and, when we retired, handed her with great ceremony to her chair. The captain, I believe, would have done me the same favour; but my brother, seeing him advance, took me under his arm, and wished him good-night. The captain is a pretty man, to be sure; tall and straight, and well made; with light-grey eyes, and a Roman nose: but there is a certain boldness in his look and manner that puts one out of countenance. But I am afraid I have put you out of all patience with this long unconnected scrawl; which I shall therefore conclude, with assuring

furing you, that neither Bath nor London, nor all the diversions of life, shall ever be able to efface the idea of my dear Letty from the heart of her ever-affectionate

Lydia Melford.

To Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton-Hall.

Dear Molly Jones,

HEAVING got a frank, I now return your fever, which I received by Mr. Higgins at the Hot Well, together with the stockings which his wife footed for me; but now they are of no survice. Nobody wears such things in this place. O Molly! you that live in the country have no deception of our doings at Bath. Here is such dressing, and fiddling, and dancing, and gadding, and courting, and plotting! O gracious! if God had not given me a good stock of discretion, what a power of things might not I reveal consarning old mistress and young mistress! Jews with beards, that were no Jews, but handsome Christians, without a hair upon their sin, strolling with spectacles, to get speech of Miss Liddy. But she's a dear sweet soul, as innocent as the child unborn. She has tould me all her inward thoughts, and disclosed her passion for Mr. Wilson; and that's not his name neither: and thof he acted among the player men, he is meat for their masters; and she has gi'en me her yellow trollapea; which Mrs. Drab, the manty-maker, says will look very well when it is scowered and smoaked with filfur. You knows as how, yallow fitts my fizzo-gomny. God he knows what havock I shall make among the mail sex, when I make my first appearance in this killing collar, with a full suit of gaze, as good as new, that I bought last Friday of Madam Friponeau, the French mullaner. Dear girl, I have seen all the fine shews of Bath; the Prades, the Squires, and the Circlis; the Crasht, the Hot-togon, and Bloody Buildings, and Harry King's Row:

Row: and I have been twice in the Bath with mistress, and na'r a smoak upon our backs, hussy. The first time I was mortally afraid, and flustered all day; and afterwards made believe that I had got the heddick; but mistress said, if I didn't go, I should take a dose of bumtassy; and so, remembering how it worked Mrs. Gwyllim a pennorth, I chose rather to go again with her into the Bath; and then I met with an axident. I dropt my petticoat, and could not get it up from the bottom. But what did that signify? They mought lass, but they could see nothing; for I was up to the sin in water. To be sure, it threw me into such a gum-bustion, that I know not what I said, nor what I did, nor how they got me out, and wrapt me in a blanket. Mrs. Tabitha scoulded a little when we got home; but she knows as I know what's what. Ah, Laud help you! There is Sir Yury Micligut, of Balnaclinch, in the cuunty of Kalloway—I took down the name from his gentleman, Mr. O'Frizzle, and he has got an estate of fifteen hundred a year—I am sure he is both rich and generous. But you nose, Molly, I was always famous for keeping secrets; and so he was very safe in trusting me with his flegm for mistress; which, to be sure, is very honourable; for, Mr. O'Frizzle assures me, he values not her portion a brass varthing. And, indeed, what's poor ten thousand pounds to a baron knight of his fortune? And, truly, I told Mr. O'Frizzle that was all she had to trust to. As for John Thomas, he's a morass fellor. I vow, I thought he would a fit with Mr. O'Frizzle, because he axed me to dance with him at Spring-Garden. But God he knows I have no thoughts eyther of wan or t'other.

As for house-news, the worst is, Chowder has fallen off greatly from his stomick: he eats nothing but white-meats, and not much of that; and wheezes, and seems to be much bloated. The
doctors

doctors think he is threatened with a dropsy. Parson Marrofat, who has got the same disorder, finds great benefit from the waters: but Chowder seems to like them no better than the squire; and mistress says, if his case don't take a favourable turn, she will fartinly carry him to Aberga'nny, to drink goat's-whey. To be sure, the poor dear honymil is lost for want of axercise; for which reason, she intends to give him an airing once a-day upon the Downs in a post-chaise. I have already made very creditable correxions in this here place, where to be sure we have the very squintasense of satiety. Mrs. Patcher, my Lady Kilmacullock's woman, and I, are sworn sisters. She has shewn me all her secrets, and learned me to wash gaze, and refracsh rusty silks and bumbeseens, by boiling them with vingear, chamberlye, and stale beer. My short sack and apron luck as good as new from the shop, and my pumpydoor as fresh as a rose, by the help of turtle-water. But this is all Greek and Latten to you, Molly. If we should come to Aberga'nny, you'll be within a day's ride of us; and then we shall see one another, please God. If not, remember me in your prayers, as I shall do by you in mine; and take care of my kitten, and give my kind sarvice to Saul; and this is all at present from your beloved friend and sarvent,

Winifred Jenkins.

Bath, April 26.

To Mrs. Gwyllim, Housekeeper at Brambleton-Hall.

I AM astonished that Dr. Lewis should take upon him to give away Alderney, without my privity and concurrants. What signifies my brother's order? My brother is little better than Noncumpush. He would give away the shirt off his back, and the teeth out of his head; nay, as for that matter, he would have ruined the family with his ridiculous charities,

rities, if it had not been for my four quarters. What between his wilfulness and his waste, his trumps and his frenzy, I lead the life of an indentured slave. Alderney gave four gallons a-day, ever since the calf was sent to market. There is so much milk out of my dairy, and the press must stand still: but I won't loose a cheese-paring; and the milk shall be made good, if the sarvents should go without butter. If they must needs have butter, let them make it of sheep's milk; but then my wool will suffer for want of grace; so that I must be a looser on all sides. Well, patience is like a stout Welsh poney; it bears a great deal, and trots a great way; but it will tire at the long-run. Before it's long, perhaps I may shew Matt. that I was not born to be the household drudge to my dying day. Gwyn rites from Crickhowel, that the price of flannel is fallen three-farthings an ell; and that's another good penny out of my pocket. When I go to market to sell, my commodity stinks; but when I want to buy the commonest thing, the owner pricks it up under my nose; and it cant't be had for love nor money. I think every thing runs cross at Brambleton-Hall. You say the gander has broke the eggs; which is a phinumenon I don't understand; for when the fox carried off the old goose last year, he took her place, and hatched the eggs, and partected the goslings like a tender parent. Then you tell me the thunder has soured two barrels of beer in the seller. But how the thunder should get there, when the seller was double locked, I can't comprehend. Howsomever, I won't have the beer thrown out till I see it with mine own eyes. Perhaps it will recover; at least it will serve for vinegar to the sarvants. You may leave off the fires in my brother's chamber and mine, as it is unsartain when we return. I hope, Gwyllim, you'll take care there is no waste: and have an eye to the maids, and keep them to their spinning. I think they

they may go very well without beer in hot weather. It serves only to inflame the blood, and set them a-gog after the men. Water will make them fair, and keep them cool and temperit. Don't forget to put up in the portmantel, that cums with Williams, along with my riding habit, hat, and feather, the vial of purl-water and the tincktur for my stomach, being as how I am much troubled with flutterencies. This is all at present, from yours,

Tabitha Bramble.

Bath, April 26.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Dick,

I HAVE done with the waters; therefore your advice comes a day too late. I grant that physick is no mystery of your making. I know it is a mystery in its own nature; and, like other mysteries, requires a strong gulp of faith to make it go down. Two days ago, I went into the King's Bath, by the advice of our friend Ch——, in order to clear the strainer of the skin, for the benefit of a free perspiration; and the first object that saluted my eye, was a child full of scrophulous ulcers, carried in the arms of one of the guides, under the very noses of the bathers. I was so shocked at the sight, that I retired immediately with indignation and disgust. Suppose the matter of these ulcers, floating on the water, comes in contact with my skin, when the pores are all open, I would ask you what must be the consequence! Good Heavens, the very thought makes my blood run cold! We know not what sores may be running into the water while we are bathing, and what sort of matter we may thus imbibe; the king's-evil, the scurvy, the cancer, and the pox; and no doubt the heat will render the *virus* the more volatile and penetrating. To purify myself from all such contamination, I went to the Duke of Kingston's private bath, and there I was almost suffo-

cated

ated for want of free air; the place was so small, and the steam so stifling.

After all, if the intention is no more than to wash the skin, I am convinced that simple element is more effectual than any water impregnated with salt and iron; which, being astringent, will certainly contract the pores, and leave a kind of crust upon the surface of the body. But I am now as much afraid of drinking as of bathing; for, after a long conversation with the doctor, about the construction of the pump and the cistern, it is very far from being clear with me, that the patients in the Pump-room do not swallow the scourings of the bathers. I cannot help suspecting, that there is, or may be, some regurgitation from the bath into the cistern of the pump. In that case, what a delicate beverage is every day quaffed by the drinkers! medicated with the sweat, and dirt, and dandriff, and the abominable discharges of various kinds, from twenty different diseased bodies, parboiling in the kettle below. In order to avoid this filthy composition, I had recourse to the spring that supplies the private baths on the Abbey-green; but I at once perceived something extraordinary in the taste and smell; and, upon enquiry, I find that the Roman baths in this quarter were found covered by an old burying ground belonging to the Abbey; through which, in all probability, the water drains in its passage: so that as we drink the decoction of living bodies at the Pump-room, we swallow the strainings of rotten bones and carcases at the private bath. I vow to God, the very idea turns my stomach! Determined, as I am, against any farther use of the Bath waters, this consideration would give me little disturbance, if I could find any thing more pure, or less pernicious, to quench my thirst; but, although the natural springs of excellent water are seen gushing spontaneous on every side, from the hills that surround us, the inhabitants, in general, make use

of well-water, so impregnated with nitre, or allum, or some other villainous mineral, that it is equally ungrateful to the taste, and mischievous to the constitution. It must be owned, indeed, that here, in Milsham-street, we have a precarious and scanty supply from the hill; which is collected in an open basin in the Circus, liable to be defiled with dead dogs, cats, rats, and every species of nastiness, which the rascally populace may throw into it, from mere wantonness and brutality.

Well, there is no nation that drinks so hoggishly as the English. What passes for wine among us, is not the juice of the grape; it is an adulterous mixture, brewed up of nauseous ingredients, by dunces, who are bunglers in the art of poison making; and yet we, and our fore-fathers, are and have been poisoned by this cursed drench, without taste or flavour. The only genuine and wholesome beverage in England, is London porter, and Dorchester table beer; but as for your ale and your gin, your cyder and your perry, and all the trashy family of made wines, I detest them as infernal compositions contrived for the destruction of the human species. But what have I to do with the human species? Except a very few friends, I care not if the whole was—

Hark ye, Lewis, my misanthropy increases every day. The longer I live, I find the folly and the fraud of mankind grow more and more intolerable. I wish I had not come from Brambleton-Hall; after having lived in solitude so long, I cannot bear the hurry and impertinence of the multitude; besides, every thing is sophisticated in these crowded places. Snares are laid for our lives in every thing we eat or drink; the very air we breathe is loaded with contagion. We cannot even sleep without risque of infection. I say, infection. This place is the rendezvous of the diseased. You will not deny that many diseases are infectious; even the consumption itself is highly infectious.

When

When a person dies of it in Italy, the bed and bedding are destroyed; the other furniture is exposed to the weather, and the apartment white-washed, before it is occupied by any other living soul. You will allow, that nothing receives infection sooner, or retains it longer, than blankets, feather-beds, and mattrasses. 'Sdeath! how do I know what miserable objects have been stewing in the bed where I now lie! I wonder, Dick, you did not put me in mind of sending for my own mattrasses. But if I had not been an ass, I should not have needed a remembrancer. There is always some plaguy reflection that rises up in judgment against me, and ruffles my spirits. Therefore, let us change the subject.

I have other reasons for abridging my stay at Bath. You know sister Tabby's complexion. If Mrs. Tabitha Bramble had been of any other race, I should certainly have looked upon her as the most—But, the truth is, she has found means to interest my affection; or rather, she is beholden to the force of prejudice, commonly called the ties of blood. Well, this amiable maiden has actually commenced a flirting correspondence with an Irish baronet of sixty-five. His name is Sir Ulic Mackilligut. He is said to be much out at elbows; and, I believe, has received false intelligence with respect to her fortune. Be that as it may, the connection is exceedingly ridiculous, and begins already to excite whispers. For my part, I have no intention to dispute her free-agency; though I shall fall upon some expedient to undeceive her paramour, as to the point which he has principally in view. But I do not think her conduct is a proper example for Liddy, who has also attracted the notice of some coxcombs in the Rooms; and Jerry tells me he suspects a strapping fellow, the knight's nephew, of some design upon the girl's heart. I shall, therefore, keep a strict eye over her aunt and her, and

even shift the scene, if I find the matter grow more serious. You perceive what an agreeable task it must be, to a man of my kidney, to have the care of such souls as these. But, hold, you shall not have another peevish word (till the next occasion) from your's,

Matt. Bramble.

Bath, April 28.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus College, Oxon.

Dear Knight,

I THINK those people are unreasonable, who complain that Bath is a contracted circle, in which the same dull scenes perpetually revolve, without variation. I am, on the contrary, amazed to find so small a place so crowded with entertainment and variety. London itself can hardly exhibit one species of diversion, to which we have not something analogous at Bath, over and above those singular advantages that are peculiar to the place. Here, for example, a man has daily opportunities of seeing the most remarkable characters of the community. He sees them in their natural attitudes and true colours; descended from their pedestals, and divested of their formal draperies, undisguised by art and affectation. Here we have ministers of state, judges, generals, bishops, projectors, philosophers, wits, poets, players, *chemists*, *fiddlers*, and *buffoons*. If he makes any considerable stay in the place, he is sure of meeting with some particular friend, whom he did not expect to see; and to me there is nothing more agreeable than such casual rencounters. Another entertainment peculiar to Bath arises from the general mixture of all degrees assembled in our public rooms, without distinction of rank or fortune. This is what my uncle reprobates as a monstrous jumble of heterogeneous principles; a vile mob of noise and impertinence, without decency or subordination.

subordination. But this chaos is to me a source of infinite amusement.

I was extremely diverted, last ball-night, to see the Master of the Ceremonies leading, with great solemnity, to the upper-end of the room, an antiquated Abigail, dressed in her lady's cast-off cloaths; whom he, I suppose, mistook for some countess just arrived at the Bath. The ball was opened by a Scotch lord, with a mulatto heiress from St. Christopher's; and the gay Colonel Tinsel danced all the evening with the daughter of an eminent tinman from the borough of Southwark. Yesterday morning, at the Pump-room, I saw a broken winded Wapping landlady squeeze through a circle of peers, to salute her brandy-merchant, who stood by the window, propped upon crutches; and a paralytic attorney of Shoe Lane, in shuffling up to the bar, kicked the shins of the Chancellor of England, while his lordship, in a cut-bob, drank a glass of water at the pump. I cannot account for my being pleased with these incidents any other way than by saying, they are truly ridiculous in their own nature, and serve to heighten the humour in the farce of life, which I am determined to enjoy as long as I can.

Those follies, that move my uncle's spleen, excite my laughter. He is as tender as a man without a skin, who cannot bear the slightest touch without flinching. What tickles another would give him torment; and yet he has what we may call lucid intervals, when he is remarkably facetious. Indeed, I never knew a hypochondriack so apt to be infected with good-humour. He is the most risible misanthrope I ever met with. A lucky joke, or any ludicrous incident, will set him a laughing immoderately, even in one of his most gloomy paroxysms; and, when the laugh is over, he will curse his own imbecillity. In conversing with strangers, he betrays no marks of disquiet. He is

splenetic with his familiars only ; and not even with them while they keep his attention employed ; but when his spirits are not exerted externally, they seem to recoil and prey upon himself. He has renounced the waters with execration ; but he begins to find a more efficacious, and certainly a much more palatable, remedy in the pleasures of society. He has discovered some old friends among the invalids of Bath ; and, in particular, renewed his acquaintance with the celebrated James Quin, who certainly did not come here to drink water. You cannot doubt, but that I had the strongest curiosity to know this original ; and it was gratified by Mr. Bramble, who has had him twice at our house to dinner.

So far as I am able to judge, Quin's character is rather more respectable than it has been generally represented. His *bon mots* are in every witling's mouth ; but many of them have a rank flavour, which one would be apt to think was derived from a natural grossness of idea. I suspect, however, that justice has not been done the author, by the collectors of those *Quiniana* ; who have let the best of them slip through their fingers, and only retained such as were suited to the taste and organs of the multitude. How far he may relax in his hours of jollity, I cannot pretend to say ; but his general conversation is conducted by the nicest rules of propriety ; and Mr. James Quin is certainly one of the best bred men in the kingdom. He is not only a most agreeable companion, but, as I am credibly informed, a very honest man ; highly susceptible of friendship ; warm, steady, and even generous in his attachments ; disdaining flattery, and incapable of meanness and dissimulation. Were I to judge, however, from Quin's eye alone, I should take him to be proud, insolent, and cruel. There is something remarkably severe and forbidding in his aspect ; and, I have been told, he was ever disposed to in-

sult

sult his inferiors and dependents. Perhaps that report has influenced my opinion of his looks. You know we are the fools of prejudice. Howsoever that may be, I have as yet seen nothing but his favourable side; and my uncle, who frequently confers with him in a corner, declares he is one of the most sensible men he ever knew. He seems to have a reciprocal regard for old Squaretoes, whom he calls by the familiar name of Matthew, and often reminds him of their old tavern-adventures: on the other hand, Matthew's eyes sparkle whenever Quin makes his appearance. Let him be never so jarring and discordant, Quin puts him in tune; and, like treble and bass in the same concert, they make excellent music together. The other day, the conversation turning upon Shakespeare, I could not help saying, with some emotion, that I would give an hundred guineas to see Mr. Quin act the part of Falstaff; upon which, turning to me with a smile—'And I would give a thousand, young gentleman,' said he, 'that I could gratify your longing.' My uncle and he are perfectly agreed in their estimate of life; which Quin says would stink in his nostrils if he did not steep it in claret.

I want to see this phænomenon in his cups; and have almost prevailed upon uncle to give him a small turtle at the Bear. In the mean time, I must entertain you with an incident that seems to confirm the judgment of those two cynic philosophers. I took the liberty to differ in opinion from Mr. Bramble, when he observed that the mixture of people in the entertainments of this place was destructive of all order and urbanity; that it rendered the plebeians insufferably arrogant and troublesome, and vulgarized the deportment and sentiments of those who moved in the upper spheres of life. He said, such a preposterous coalition would bring us into contempt with all our neighbours; and was worse, in fact, than debasing the gold coin of the nation.

nation. I argued, on the contrary, that those plebeians, who discovered such eagerness to imitate the dress and equipage of their superiors, would likewise, in time, adopt their maxims and their manners, be polished by their conversation, and refined by their example; but when I appealed to Mr. Quin, and asked if he did not think that such an unreserved mixture would improve the whole mass—‘Yes,’ said he, ‘as a plate of marmalade would improve a pan of sir-reverence.’

I owned I was not much conversant in high-life, but I had seen what were called polite assemblies in London and elsewhere; that those of Bath seemed to be as decent as any; and that, upon the whole, the individuals that composed them would not be found deficient in good manners and decorum. ‘But let us have recourse to experience,’ said I. ‘Jack Holder, who was intended for a parson, has succeeded to an estate of two thousand a year, by the death of his elder brother. He is now at the Bath driving about in a phaeton and four, with French-horns. He has treated with turtle and claret at all the taverns in Bath and Bristol, till his guests are gorged with good cheer: he has bought a dozen suits of fine cloaths, by the advice of the Master of the Ceremonies, under whose tuition he has entered himself: he has lost some hundreds at billiards to sharpers, and taken one of the nymphs of Avon Street into keeping; but, finding all these channels insufficient to drain him of his current cash, his counsellor has engaged him to give a general tea-drinking to-morrow at Wiltshire’s room. In order to give it the more eclat, every table is to be furnished with sweet-meats and nosegays; which, however, are not to be touched till notice is given by the ringing of a bell, and then the ladies may help themselves without restriction. This will be no bad way of trying the company’s breeding.’

‘I will

‘I will abide by that experiment,’ cried my uncle; ‘and if I could find a place to stand secure without the vortex of the tumult, which I know will ensue, I would certainly go thither and enjoy the scene.’ Quin proposed that we should take our station in the musick-gallery; and we took his advice. Holder had got thither before us, with his horns perdue; but we were admitted. The tea-drinking passed as usual; and the company having risen from the tables, were sauntering in groupes, in expectation of the signal for attack, when the bell beginning to ring, they flew with eagerness to the desert, and the whole place was instantly in commotion. There was nothing but jostling, scrambling, pulling, snatching, struggling, scolding, and screaming. The nosegays were torn from one another’s hands and bosoms; the glasses and china went to wreck; the tables and floor were strewed with comfits. Some cried, some swore; and the tropes and figures of Billingsgate were used without reserve in all their native zest and flavour; nor were those flowers of rhetorick unattended with significant gesticulation. Some snapped their fingers; some forked them out; some clapped their hands, and some their back-sides: at length they fairly proceeded to pulling caps, and every thing seemed to presage a general battle; when Holder ordered his horns to sound a charge, with a view to animate the combatants, and inflame the contest! but this manœuvre produced an effect quite contrary to what he expected. It was a note of reproach, that roused them to an immediate sense of their situation. They were ashamed of their absurd deportment, and suddenly desisted. They gathered up their caps, ruffles, and handkerchiefs; and great part of them retired in silent mortification.

Quin laughed at this adventure; but my uncle’s delicacy was hurt. He hung his head in manifest chagrin, and seemed to repine at the triumph of his judgment.

judgment. Indeed, his victory was more compleat than he imagined; for, as we afterwards learned, the two amazons who singularized themselves most in the action, did not come from the purlieus of Puddle-dock, but from the courtly neighbourhood of St. James's palace. One was a baroness, and the other a wealthy knight's dowager. My uncle spoke not a word till we had made our retreat good to the coffee-house; where taking off his hat, and wiping his forehead—'I bless God,' said he, 'that Mrs. Tabitha Bramble did not take the field to day!—' 'I would pit her for a cool hundred,' cried Quin, 'against the best shake-bag of the whole main.' The truth is, nothing could have kept her at home but the accident of her having taken physick before she knew the nature of the entertainment. She has been for some days furbishing up an old suit of black velvet, to make her appearance as Sir Ulic's partner at the next ball.

I have much to say of this amiable kinswoman; but she has not been properly introduced to your acquaintance. She is remarkably civil to Mr. Quin; of whose sarcastick humour she seems to stand in awe; but her caution is no match for her impertinence. 'Mr. Gwynn,' said she, the other day, 'I was once vastly entertained with your playing the Ghost of Gimlet at Drury Lane, when you rose up through the stage, with a white face and red eyes, and spoke of *quails upon the frightful porcupine*. Do pray, spout a little the Ghost of Gimlet.'—'Madam,' said Quin, with a glance of ineffable disdain, 'the Ghost of Gimlet is laid never to rise again.' Insensible of this check, she proceeded—'Well, to be sure, you looked and talked so like a real ghost; and then the cock crowed so natural. I wonder how you could teach him to crow so exact, in the very nick of time; but I suppose he's game. An't he game, Mr. Gwynn?'—'Dunghill, Madam.'—'Well, dunghill, or not dunghill, he has
got

got such a clear counter-tenor, that I wish I had such another at Brambleton-Hall, to wake the maids of a morning. Do you know where I could find one of his brood ?—‘ Probably in the work-house of St. Giles’s parish, Madam ; but I protest I know not his particular mew.’ My uncle, frying with vexation, cried—‘ Good God, sister, how you talk ! I have told you twenty times, that this gentleman’s name is not Gwynn.’—‘ Hoity, toity, brother of mine,’ she replied, ‘ no offence I hope ; Gwynn is an honourable name, of true old British extraction. I thought the gentleman had been come of Mrs. Helen Gwynn, who was of his own profession ; and if so be that were the case, he might be of King Charles’s breed, and have royal blood in his veins.’—No, Madam,’ answered Quin, with great solemnity, ‘ my mother was not a whore of such distinction. True it is, I am sometimes tempted to believe myself of royal descent ; for my inclinations are often arbitrary. If I was an absolute prince, at this instant, I believe I should send for the head of your cook in a charger. She has committed felony on the person of that John Dory ; which is mangled in a cruel manner, and even presented without sauce—*O tempora ! O mores !*’

This good humoured sally turned the conversation into a less disagreeable channel. But, lest you should think my scribble as tedious as Mrs. Tabby’s clack, I shall not add another word, but that I am as usual, Yours,

J. Melford.

Bath, April 30.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Lewis,

I RECEIVED your bill upon Wiltshire, which was punctually honoured ; but as I do not chuse to keep so much cash by me, in a common lodging-house, I have deposited two hundred and fifty pounds

pounds in the bank of Bath, and shall take their bills for it in London, when I leave this place, where the season draws to an end. You must know, that now being a-foot, I am resolved to give Liddy a glimpse of London. She is one of the best-hearted creatures I ever knew, and gains upon my affection every day. As for Tabby, I have dropped such hints to the Irish baronet, concerning her fortune, as, I make no doubt, will cool the ardour of his addresses. Then her pride will take the alarm; and the rancour of stale maidenhood being chafed, we shall hear nothing but slander and abuse of Sir Ulic Mackilligut. This rupture, I foresee, will facilitate our departure from Bath; where, at present, Tabby seems to enjoy herself with peculiar satisfaction. For my part, I detest it so much, that I should not have been able to stay so long in the place if I had not discovered some old friends, whose conversation alleviates my disgust. Going to the coffee-house one forenoon, I could not help contemplating the company, with equal surprize and compassion. We consisted of thirteen individuals; seven lamed by the gout, rheumatism, or palsy; three maimed by accident; and the rest either deaf or blind. One hobbled, another hopped; a third dragged his leg after him like a wounded snake; a fourth straddled betwixt a pair of long crutches, like the mummy of a felon hanging in chains; a fifth was bent into a horizontal position, like a mounted telescope, shoved in by a couple of chairmen; and the sixth was the bust of a man, set upright in a wheel machine, which the waiter moved from place to place.

Being struck with some of their faces, I consulted the subscription-book; and, perceiving the names of several old friends, began to consider the groupe with more attention. At length I discovered Rear-Admiral Balderick, the companion of my youth, whom I had not seen since he was ap-

pointed lieutenant of the Severn. He was metamorphosed into an old man, with a wooden-leg and a weather-beaten face; which appeared the more ancient from his grey locks, that were truly venerable. Sitting down at the table, where he was reading a newspaper, I gazed at him for some minutes, with a mixture of pleasure and regret, which made my heart gush with tenderness; then taking him by the hand—‘Ah, Sam,’ said I, ‘forty years ago I little thought—’ I was too much moved to proceed. ‘An old friend sure enough!’ cried he, squeezing my hand, and surveying me eagerly through his glasses. ‘I know the looming of the vessel, though she has been hard strained since we parted; but I can’t heave up the name.’ The moment I told him who I was, he exclaimed—‘Ha! Matt, my old fellow cruizer, still afloat!’ And, starting up, hugged me in his arms. His transport, however, boded me no good; for, in saluting me, he thrust the spring of his spectacles into my eye, and, at the same time, set his wooden stump upon my gouty toe; an attack that made me shed tears in sad earnest. After the hurry of our recognition was over, he pointed out two of our common friends in the room; the bust was what remained of Colonel Cockril, who had lost the use of his limbs in making an American campaign; and the telescope proved to be my college chum, Sir Reginald Bentley; who, with his new title, and unexpected inheritance, commenced fox-hunter, without having served his apprenticeship to the mystery; and, in consequence of following the hounds through a river, was seized with an inflammation in his bowels, which has contracted him into his present attitude.

Our former correspondence was forth-with renewed, with the most hearty expressions of mutual good-will; and, as we had met so unexpectedly, we agreed to dine together that very day at the ta-

vern. My friend Quin, being luckily unengaged, obliged us with his company; and, truly, this was the most happy day I have passed these twenty years. You and I, Lewis, having been always together, never tasted friendship in this high gout, contracted from long absence. I cannot express the half of what I felt at this casual meeting of three or four companions, who had been so long separated, and so roughly treated by the storms of life. It was a renovation of youth; a kind of resuscitation of the dead, that realized those interesting dreams, in which we sometimes retrieve our ancient friends from the grave. Perhaps my enjoyment was not the less pleasing for being mixed with a strain of melancholy, produced by the remembrance of past scenes, that conjured up the ideas of some endearing connections, which the hand of death has actually dissolved.

The spirits and good-humour of the company seemed to triumph over the wreck of their constitutions. They had even philosophy enough to joke upon their own calamities; such is the power of friendship, the sovereign cordial of life. Afterwards found, however, that they were not without their moments, and even hours, of disquiet. Each of them apart, in succeeding conferences, expatiated upon his own particular grievances; and they were all malcontents at bottom. Over and above their personal disasters, they thought themselves unfortunate in the lottery of life. Baldrick complained, that all the recompence he had received for his long and hard service, was the half-pay of a rear-admiral. The colonel was mortified to see himself over-topped by upstart generals, some of whom he had once commanded; and, being a man of a liberal turn, could ill put up with a moderate annuity, for which he had sold his commission. As for the baronet, having run himself considerably in debt, on a contested election, he has
been

been obliged to relinquish his seat in parliament, and his seat in the country at the same time, and put his estate to nurse; but his chagrin, which is the effect of his own misconduct, does not affect me half so much as that of the other two, who have acted honourable and distinguished parts on the great theatre, and are now reduced to lead a weary life in this stewpan of idleness and insignificance. They have long left off using the waters, after having experienced their inefficacy. The diversions of the place they are not in a condition to enjoy. How then do they make shift to pass their time? In the forenoon they crawl out to the rooms or the coffee-house, where they take a hand at whist, or descant upon the General Advertiser; and their evenings they murder in private parties, among peevish invalids, and insipid old women. This is the case with a good number of individuals, whom nature seems to have intended for better purposes.

About a dozen years ago, many decent families, restricted to small fortunes, besides those that came hither on the score of health, were tempted to settle at Bath, where they could then live comfortably, and even make a genteel appearance, at a small expence; but the madness of the times has made the place too hot for them, and they are now obliged to think of other migrations. Some have already fled to the mountains of Wales, and others have retired to Exeter. Thither, no doubt, they will be followed by the flood of luxury and extravagance, which will drive them from place to place to the very Land's End; and there, I suppose, they will be obliged to ship themselves to some other country. Bath is become a mere sink of profligacy and extortion. Every article of house-keeping is raised to an enormous price; a circumstance no longer to be wondered at, when we know that every petty retainer of fortune piques himself

upon keeping a table, and thinks it is for the honour of his character to wink at the knavery of his servants, who are in a confederacy with the market-people; and, of consequence, pay whatever they demand. Here is now a mushroom of opulence, who pays a cook seventy guineas a week for furnishing him with one meal a-day. This portentous frenzy is become so contagious, that the very rabble and refuse of mankind are infected. I have known a negro-driver from Jamaica pay overnight to the master of one of the rooms, sixty-five guineas for tea and coffee to the company, and leave Bath next morning, in such obscurity, that not one of his guests had the slightest idea of his person, or even made the least enquiry about his name. Incidents of this kind are frequent; and every day teems with fresh absurdities, which are too gross to make a thinking man merry. But I feel the spleen creeping on me apace; and therefore will indulge you with a cessation, that you may have no unnecessary cause to curse your correspondence with, dear Dick, yours ever,

Bath, May 5.

Mat. Bramble.

To Miss Lætitia Willis, at Gloucester.

My Dear Letty,

I wrote you at great length by the post, the twenty-sixth of last month, to which I refer you for an account of our proceedings at Bath; and I expect your answer with impatience. But, having this opportunity of a private hand, I send you two dozen of Bath rings; six of the best of which I desire you will keep for yourself, and distribute the rest among the young ladies, our common friends, as you shall think proper. I do not know how you will approve of the mottoes; some of them are not much to my own liking; but I was obliged to take such as I could find ready manufactured. I am
vexed,

vexed, that neither you nor I have received any farther information of a certain person. Sure it cannot be wilful neglect! O my dear Willis! I begin to be visited by strange fancies, and to have some melancholy doubts; which, however, it would be ungenerous to harbour without farther enquiry. My uncle, who has made me a present of a very fine set of garnets, talks of treating us with a jaunt to London; which, you may imagine, will be highly agreeable; but I like Bath so well, that I hope he will not think of leaving it till the season is quite over; and yet, betwixt friends, something has happened to my aunt, which will probably shorten our stay in this place.

Yesterday, in the forenoon, she went by herself to a breakfasting in one of the rooms; and, in half an hour, returned in great agitation, having Chowder along with her in the chair. I believe some accident must have happened to that unlucky animal, which is the great source of all her troubles. Dear Letty! what a pity it is, that a woman of her years and discretion, should place her affection upon such an ugly, ill-conditioned cur, that snarls and snaps at every body. I asked John Thomas, the footman who attended her, what was the matter, and he did nothing but grin. A famous dog-doctor was sent for, and undertook to cure the patient, provided he might carry him home to his own house; but his mistress would not part with him out of her own sight. She ordered the cook to warm cloths, which she applied to his bowels with her own hand. She gave up all thoughts of going to the ball in the evening; and when Sir Ulic came to drink tea, refused to be seen; so that he went away to look for another partner. My brother Jerry whistles and dances. My uncle sometimes shrugs up his shoulders, and sometimes bursts out a-laughing. My aunt sobs and scolds by turns; and her woman, Win Jenkins, stares and

wonders with a foolish face of curiosity; and, for my part, I am as curious as she, but ashamed to ask questions.

Perhaps time will discover the mystery; for if it was any thing that happened in the Rooms, it cannot be long concealed. All I know is, that last night at supper, Miss Bramble spoke very disdainfully of Sir Ulic Mackilligut, and asked her brother if he intended to keep us sweltering all the summer at Bath.' 'No, sister Tabitha,' said he, with an arch smile, 'we shall retreat before the Dog-days begin; though I make no doubt that, with a little temperance and discretion, our constitutions might be kept cool enough all the year, even at Bath.' As I do not know the meaning of this insinuation, I will not pretend to make any remarks upon it at present; hereafter, perhaps, I may be able to explain it more to your satisfaction; in the mean time, I beg you will be punctual in your correspondence, and continue to love your ever-faithful

Bath, May 6.

Lydia Melford.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus College, Oxon.

So, then, Mrs. Blackerby's affair has proved a false alarm, and I have saved my money? I wish, however, her declaration had not been so premature; for, though my being thought capable of making her a mother might have given me some credit, the reputation of an intrigue with such a cracked pitcher does me no honour at all. In my last I told you I had hopes of seeing Quin in his hours of elevation at the tavern, which is the temple of mirth and good-fellowship; where he, as priest of Comus, utters the inspirations of wit and humour. I have had that satisfaction. I have dined with his club at the Three Tuns, and had the honour to sit him out. At half an hour past eight

eight in the evening, he was carried home with six good bottles of claret under his belt ; and it being then Friday, he gave orders that he should not be disturbed till Sunday at noon. You must not imagine that this dose had any other effect upon his conversation, but that of making it more extravagantly entertaining. He had lost the use of his limbs, indeed, several hours before we parted, but he retained all his other faculties in perfection ; and, as he gave vent to every whimsical idea as it rose, I was really astonished at the brilliancy of his thoughts, and the force of his expression. Quin is a real voluptuary in the articles of eating and drinking ; and so confirmed an epicure, in the common acceptation of the term, that he cannot put up with ordinary fare. This is a point of such importance with him, that he always takes upon himself the charge of catering ; and a man admitted to his mess, is always sure of eating delicate victuals, and drinking excellent wine. He owns himself addicted to the delights of the stomach, and often jokes upon his own sensuality ; but there is nothing selfish in this appetite. He finds that good cheer unites good company, exhilarates the spirits, opens the heart, banishes all restraint from conversation, and promotes the happiest purposes of social life. But Mr. James Quin is not a subject to be discussed in the compass of one letter ; I shall therefore, at present, leave him to his repose, and call another of a very different complexion.

You desire to have farther acquaintance with the person of our aunt, and promise yourself much entertainment from her connexion with Sir Ulic Mackilligut : but in this hope you are baulked already ; that connexion is dissolved. The Irish baronet is an hound, that, finding her carrion, has quitted the scent.—I have already told you, that Mrs. Tabitha Bramble is a maiden of forty-five. In her person, she is tall, raw-boned, aukward, flat-chested,

ed, and stooping; her complexion is fallow and freckled; her eyes are not grey, but greenish, like those of a cat, and generally inflamed; her hair is of a sandy, or rather dusty hue; her forehead low; her nose long, sharp, and, towards the extremity, always red in cool weather; her lips skinny, her mouth extensive, her teeth straggling and loose, of various colours and conformation; and her long neck shrivelled into a thousand wrinkles.—In her temper, she is proud, stiff, vain, imperious, prying, malicious, greedy, and uncharitable. In all likelihood, her natural austeriety has been soured by disappointment in love; for her long celibacy is by no means owing to her dislike of matrimony; on the contrary, she has left no stone unturned to avoid the reproachful epithet of old maid.

Before I was born, she had gone such lengths in the way of flirting with a recruiting officer, that her reputation was a little singed. She afterwards made advances to the curate of the parish, who dropped some distant hints about the next presentation to the living, which was in her brother's gift; but finding that was already promised to another, he flew off at a tangent; and Mrs. Tabby, in revenge, found means to deprive him of his cure. Her next lover was a lieutenant of a man of war, a relation of the family, who did not understand the refinements of the passion, and expressed no aversion to grapple with cousin Tabby in the way of marriage; but before matters could be properly adjusted, he went out on a cruise, and was killed in an engagement with a French frigate. Our aunt, though baffled so often, did not yet despair—She laid all her snares for Dr. Lewis, who is the *fidus Achates* of my uncle. She even fell sick upon the occasion, and prevailed with Matt. to interpose in her behalf with his friend; but the Doctor, being a shy cock, would not be caught with chaff, and flatly rejected the proposal: so that Mrs. Tabitha

was

was content to exert her patience once more, after having endeavoured in vain to effect a rupture betwixt the two friends; and now she thinks proper to be very civil to Lewis, who is become necessary to her in the way of his profession.

These, however, are not the only efforts she has made towards a nearer conjunction with our sex. Her fortune was originally no more than a thousand pounds; but she gained an accession of five hundred by the death of a sister, and the lieutenant left her three hundred in his will. These sums she has more than doubled, by living free of all expence in her brother's house; and dealing in cheese and Welch flannel, the produce of his flocks and dairy. At present her capital has increased to about four thousand pounds; and her avarice seems to grow every day more and more rapacious; but even this is not so intolerable, as the perverseness of her nature, which keeps the whole family in disquiet and uproar. She is one of those geniuses who find some diabolical enjoyment in being dreaded and detested by their fellow-creatures.

I once told my uncle, I was surprised that a man of his disposition could bear such a domestic plague, when it could be so easily removed—The remark made him sore, because it seemed to tax him with want of resolution—Wrinkling up his nose, and drawing down his eye-brows, “A young fellow (said he) when he first thrusts his snout into the world, is apt to be surprised at many things which a man of experience knows to be ordinary and unavoidable—This precious aunt of yours is become insensibly a part of my constitution—Damn her! She’s a *noli me tangere* in my flesh, which I cannot bear to be touched or tampered with.” I made no reply; but shifted the conversation. He really has an affection for this original; which maintains its ground in defiance of common sense, and in defiance of that contempt which he must certainly feel

feel for her character and understanding. Nay, I am convinced, that she has likewise a most virulent attachment to his person; though her love never shews itself but in the shape of discontent; and she persists in tormenting him out of mere tenderness—The only objects within doors upon which she bestows any marks of affection, in the usual style, is her dog Chowder; a filthy cur from Newfoundland, which she had in a present from the wife of a skipper in Swansey—One would imagine she had distinguished this beast with her favour on account of his ugliness and ill-nature; if it was not, indeed, an instinctive sympathy between his disposition and her own. Certain it is, she caresses him without ceasing; and even harasses the family in the service of this cursed animal, which, indeed, has proved the proximate cause of her breach with Sir Ulic Mackilligut.

You must know, she yesterday wanted to steal a march of poor Liddy, and went to breakfast in the room without any other companion than her dog, in expectation of meeting with the Baronet, who had agreed to dance with her in the evening—Chowder no sooner made his appearance in the room, than the Master of the Ceremonies, incensed at his presumption, ran up to drive him away, and threatened him with his foot; but the other seemed to despise his authority, and displaying a formidable case of long, white, sharp teeth, kept the puny monarch at bay—While he stood under some trepidation, fronting his antagonist, and bawling to the waiter, Sir Ulic Mackilligut came to his assistance, and seeming ignorant of the connexion between this intruder and his mistress, gave the former such a kick in the jaws, as sent him howling to the door.—Mrs. Tabitha, incensed at this outrage, ran after him, squalling in a tone equally disagreeable, while the Baronet followed her on one side, making apologies for his mistake; and Derrick on the other,

other, making remonstrances upon the rules and regulations of the place.

Far from being satisfied with the knight's excuses, she said she was sure he was no gentleman; and when the Master of the Ceremonies offered to hand her into the chair, she rapped him over the knuckles with her fan. My uncle's footman being still at the door, she and Chowder got into the same vehicle, and were carried off amidst the jokes of the chairmen and other populace—I had been riding out on Clerken-down, and happened to enter just as the *fracas* was over—The Baronet, coming up to me with an affected air of chagrin, recounted the adventure; at which I laughed heartily, and then his countenance cleared up. ‘My dear soul, (said he,) when I saw a sort of a wild baist, snarling with open mouth at the Master of the Ceremonies, like the red cow going to devour Tom Thumb, I could do no less than go to the assistance of the little man; but I never dreamt the baist was one of Mrs. Brambles attendants—O! if I had, he might have made his breakfast upon Derrick and welcome—But, you know, my dear friend, how natural it is for us Irishmen to blunder, and to take the wrong sow by the ear—However, I will confess judgment, and cry her mercy; and, ’tis to be hoped, a penitent sinner may be forgiven.’ I told him, that as the offence was not voluntary on his side, it was to be hoped he would not find her implacable.

But, in truth, all this concern was dissembled. In his approaches of gallantry to Mrs. Tabitha, he had been misled by a mistake of at least six thousand pounds, in the calculation of her fortune; and in this particular he was just undeceived. He, therefore, seized the first opportunity of incurring her displeasure decently, in such a manner as would certainly annihilate the correspondence; and he could not have taken a more effectual method, than that of beating her dog. When he presented him-

self at our door, to pay his respects to the offended fair, he was refused admittance; and given to understand, that he should never find her at home for the future. She was not so inaccessible to Derrick, who came to demand satisfaction for the insult she had offered to him, even in the verge of his own court. She knew it was convenient to be well with the Master of the Ceremonies, while she continued to frequent the rooms; and, having heard he was a poet, began to be afraid of making her appearance in a ballad or lampoon. She therefore made excuses for what she had done, imputing it to the flutter of her spirits; and subscribed handsomely for his poems: so that he was perfectly appeased, and overwhelmed her with a profusion of compliments. He even solicited a reconciliation with Chowder; which, however, the latter declined; and he declared, that if he could find a precedent in the annals of the Bath, which he would carefully examine for that purpose, her favourite should be admitted to the next public breakfasting—But, I believe, she will not expose herself or him to the risque of a second disgrace—Who will supply the place of Mackilligut in her affections, I cannot foresee; but nothing in the shape of a man can come amiss. Though she is a violent church woman, of the most intolerant zeal, I believe in my conscience she would have no objection, at present, to treat on the score of matrimony with an Anabaptist, Quaker, or Jew; and even ratify the treaty at the expence of her own conversion. But, perhaps, I think too hardly of this kinswoman; who, I must own, is very little beholden to the good opinion of

Bath, May 6.

J. Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

You ask me, why I don't take the air a horse-back, during this fine weather?—In which of the avenues of this paradise would you have me take that

that exercise? Shall I committ myself to the high-roads of London or Bristol, to be stifled with dust, or pressed to death in the midst of post-chaise, flying-machines, waggons, and coal horses; besides the troops of fine gentlemen that take to the highway to shew their horsemanship; and the coaches of fine ladies, who go thither to shew their equipages? Shall I attempt the Downs, and fatigue myself to death in climbing up an eternal ascent, without any hopes of reaching the summit? Know then, I have made divers desperate leaps at those upper regions; but always fell backward into this vapour-pit, exhausted and dispirited by those ineffectual efforts; and here we poor valetudinarians pant and struggle, like so many Chinese gudgeons gasping in the bottom of a punch-bowl. By Heaven, it is a kind of enchantment! If I do not speedily break the spell, and escape, I may chance to give up the ghost in this nauseous stew of corruption—It was but two nights ago, that I had like to have made my public exit, at a minute's warning. One of my greatest weakneses is that of suffering myself to be over-ruled by the opinion of people whose judgment I despise—I own, with shame and confusion of face, that importunity of any kind I cannot resist. This want of courage and constancy is an original flaw in my nature, which you must have often observed with compassion, if not with contempt. I am afraid some of our boasted virtues may be traced up to this defect—

Without farther preamble, I was persuaded to go to a ball, on purpose to see Liddy dance a minuet with a young petulant jackanapes, the only son of a wealthy undertaker from London, whose mother lodges in our neighbourhood, and has contracted an acquaintance with Tabby. I sat a couple of long hours, half stifled, in the midst of a noisome crowd; and could not help wondering, that so many hundreds of those that rank as rational

tional creatures, could find entertainment in seeing a succession of insipid animals, describing the same dull figure for a whole evening, on an area, not much bigger than a taylor's shop-board. If there had been any beauty, grace, activity, magnificent dress, or variety of any kind, howsoever absurd, to engage the attention, and amuse the fancy, I should not have been surprised; but there was no such object: it was a tiresome repetition of the same languid, frivolous scene, performed by actors that seemed to sleep in all their motions.—The continual swimming of those phantoms before my eyes, gave me a swimming of the head; which was also affected by the fouled air, circulating through such a number of rotten human bellows.—I therefore retreated towards the door, and stood in the passage to the next room, talking to my friend Quin; when an end being put to the minuets, the benches were removed to make way for the country-dances; and the multitude rising at once, the whole atmosphere was put in commotion. Then, all of a sudden, came rushing upon me an Egyptian gale, so impregnated with pestilential vapours, that my nerves were overpowered, and I dropt senseless upon the floor.

You may easily conceive what a clamour and confusion this accident must have produced, in such an assembly—I soon recovered, however, and found myself in an easy chair, supported by my own people—Sister Tabby, in her great tenderness, had put me to the torture, squeezing my head under her arm, and stuffing my nose with spirit of hartshorn, till the whole inside was excoriated. I no sooner got home, than I sent for doctor Ch——, who assured me, I needed not be alarmed, for my swooning was entirely occasioned by an accidental impression of fetid effluvia upon nerves of uncommon sensibility. I know not how other people's nerves are constructed; but one would imagine they must be

be made of very coarse materials, to stand the shock of such an horrid assault. It was, indeed, *a compound of villainous smells*, in which the most violent stinks, and the most powerful perfumes, contended for the mastery. Imagine to yourself a high exalted essence of mingled odours, arising from putrid gums, imposthumated lungs, four flatulencies, rank arm-pits, sweating feet, running sores and issues, plaisters, ointments, and embrocations, Hungary-water, spirit of lavender, assafœtida drops, musk, hartshorn, and sal volatile; besides a thousand frowzy steams, which I could not analyse. Such, O Dick! is the fragrant æther we breathe in the polite assemblies of Bath—Such is the atmosphere I have exchanged for the pure, elastic, animating air of the Welch mountains—*O Rus, quando te aspiciam!*—I wonder what the devil possessed me—

But few words are best: I have taken my resolution—You may well suppose I don't intend to entertain the company with a second exhibition—I have promised, in an evil hour, to proceed to London, and that promise shall be performed; but my stay in the metropolis shall be brief. I have, for the benefit of my health, projected an expedition to the North, which, I hope, will afford some agreeable pastime. I have never travelled farther that way than Scarborough; and, I think, it is a reproach upon me, as a British freeholder, to have lived so long without making an excursion to the other side of the Tweed. Besides, I have some relations settled in Yorkshire, to whom it may not be improper to introduce my nephew and his sister—At present, I have nothing to add, but that Tabby is happily disentangled from the Irish Baronet; and that I will not fail to make you acquainted, from time to time, with the sequel of our adventures; a mark of considera-

tion, which, perhaps, you would willingly dispense with in

Your humble servant,

Bath, May 8.

Matthew Bramble.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus College, Oxon.

Dear Phillips,

A FEW days ago we were terribly alarmed by my uncle's fainting at the ball—He has been ever since cursing his own folly, for going thither at the request of an impertinent woman. He declares, he will sooner visit a house infected with the plague, than trust himself in such a nauseous spital for the future, for he swears the accident was occasioned by the stench of the crowd; and that he would never desire a stronger proof of our being made of very gross materials, than our having withstood the annoyance, by which he was so much discomposed. For my part, I am very thankful for the coarseness of my organs, being in no danger of ever falling a sacrifice to the delicacy of my nose. Mr. Bramble is extravagantly delicate in all his sensations, both of soul and body. I was informed by Dr. Lewis, that he once fought a duel with an officer of the horse-guards, for turning a-side to the Park wall, on a necessary occasion, when he was passing with a lady under his protection. His blood rises at every instance of insolence and cruelty, even where he himself is no way concerned; and ingratitude makes his teeth chatter. On the other hand, the recital of a generous, humane, or grateful action, never fails to draw from him tears of approbation, which he is often greatly distressed to conceal.

Yesterday, one Pounceford gave tea, on particular invitation—This man, after having been long buffeted by adversity, went abroad; and Fortune, resolving to make him amends for her former coyness, set him all at once up to the very ears in affluence.

fluence. He has now emerged from obscurity, and blazes out in all the tinsel of the times. I don't find that he is charged with any practices that the law deems dishonest, or that his wealth has made him arrogant and inaccessible; on the contrary, he takes great pains to appear affable and gracious. But they say, he is remarkable for shrinking from his former friendships, which were generally too plain and home-spun, to appear amidst his present brilliant connexions; and that he seems uneasy at the sight of some old benefactors, whom a man of honour would take pleasure to acknowledge—Be that as it may, he had so effectually engaged the company at Bath, that when I went with my uncle to the coffee-house in the evening, there was not a soul in the room but one person, seemingly in years, who sat by the fire, reading one of the papers. Mr. Bramble taking his station close by him, 'There is such a crowd and confusion of chairs in the passage to Simpson's (said he) that we could hardly get along—I wish those minions of fortune would fall upon more laudable ways of spending their money.—I suppose, Sir, you like this kind of entertainment as little as I do?' 'I can't say I have any great relish for such entertainments,' answered the other, without taking his eyes off the paper.—'Mr. Serle (resumed my uncle) I beg pardon for interrupting you; but I can't resist the curiosity I have to know if you received a card on this occasion?'

The man seemed surprised at this address, and made some pause, as doubtful what answer he should make. 'I know my curiosity is impertinent for asking the favour.' 'If that be the case (replied Mr. Serle) I shall gratify you without hesitation, by owning, that I have had no card. But, give me leave, Sir, to ask, in my turn, what reason you think I have to expect such an invitation from

the gentleman who gives tea?' 'I have my own reasons, (cried Mr. Bramble, with some emotion;) and am convinced more than ever, that this Paunceford is a contemptible fellow.' 'Sir, (said the other, laying down the paper,) I have not the honour to know you; but your discourse is a little mysterious, and seems to require some explanation. The person you are pleased to treat so cavalieri, is a gentleman of some consequence in the community; and, for aught you know, I may also have my particular reasons for defending his character—' 'If I was not convinced to the contrary (observed the other) I should not have gone so far—' 'Let me tell you, Sir, (said the stranger, raising his voice,) you have gone too far in hazarding such reflections——'

Here he was interrupted by my uncle; who asked peevishly, if he was Don Quixote enough, at this time of day, to throw down his gauntlet as champion for a man who had treated him with such ungrateful neglect. For my part (added he) I shall never quarrel with you again upon this subject; and what I have said now, has been suggested as much by my regard for you, as by my contempt of him—' Mr. Serle, then pulling off his spectacles, eyed uncle very earnestly, saying, in a mitigated tone, 'Surely I am much obliged——Ah, Mr. Bramble! I now recollect your features, though I have not seen you these many years.' 'We might have been less strangers to one another (answered the 'squire) if our correspondence had not been interrupted, in consequence of a misunderstanding occasioned by this very——; but no matter—Mr. Serle, I esteem your character; and my friendship, such as it is, you may freely command.' 'The offer is too agreeable to be declined, (said he;) I embrace it very cordially; and, as the first fruits of it, request that you will change this subject,

subject, which, with me, is a matter of peculiar delicacy.'

My uncle owned he was in the right, and the discourse took a more general turn. Mr. Serle passed the evening with us at our lodgings; and appeared to be intelligent, and even entertaining; but his disposition was rather of a melancholy hue. My uncle says he's a man of uncommon parts, and unquestioned probity: that his fortune, which was originally small, has been greatly hurt by a romantic spirit of generosity, which he has often displayed, even at the expence of his discretion, in favour of worthless individuals—That he had rescued Paunceford from the lowest distress, when he was a bankrupt both in means and reputation—That he had espoused his interests with a degree of enthusiasm, broke with several friends, and even drawn his sword against my uncle, who had particular reasons for questioning the moral character of the said Paunceford: that, without Serle's countenance and assistance, the other could never have embraced the opportunity which had raised him to this pinnacle of wealth: that Paunceford, in the first transports of his success, had written, from abroad, letters to different correspondents, owning his obligations to Mr. Serle, in the warmest terms of acknowledgment, and declaring he considered himself only as a factor for the occasions of his best friend: that, without doubt, he had made declarations of the same nature to his benefactor himself, though this last was always silent and reserved on the subject; but for some years, those tropes and figures of rhetoric had been disused: that, upon his return to England, he had been lavish in his caresses to Mr. Serle, invited him to his house, and pressed him to make it his own: that he had overwhelmed him with general professions, and affected to express the warmest regard for him, in company of their common acquaintance; so that every body believed

believed his gratitude was as liberal as his fortune; and some went so far as to congratulate Mr. Serle on both.

All this time Paunceford carefully and artfully avoided particular discussions with his old patron, who had too much spirit to drop the most distant hint of balancing the account of obligation: that, nevertheless, a man of his feelings could not but resent this shocking return for all his kindness; and, therefore, he withdrew himself from the connexion, without coming to the least explanation, or speaking a syllable on the subject to any living soul; so that now their correspondence is reduced to a slight salute with the hat, when they chance to meet in any public place; an accident that rarely happens, for their walks lie different ways. Mr. Paunceford lives in a palace, feeds upon dainties, is arrayed in sumptuous apparel, appears in all the pomp of equipage, and passes his time among the nobles of the land. Serle lodges in Stall-street, up two pair of stairs backwards, walks a-foot in a Bath-rug, eats for twelve shillings a-week, and drinks water as a preservative against the gout and gravel—Mark the vicissitude. Paunceford once resided in a garret; where he subsisted upon sheep's-trotters and cow-heel, from which commons he was translated to the table of Serle, that ever abounded with good cheer; until want of economy and retention reduced him to a slender annuity in his decline of years, that scarce affords the bare necessaries of life—Paunceford, however, does him the honour to speak of him still with uncommon regard; and to declare what pleasure it would give him to contribute in any shape to his convenience: 'But you know (he never fails to add) he's a shy kind of a man—And then such a perfect philosopher, that he looks upon all superfluities with the most sovereign contempt.'

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Having given you this sketch of 'squire Paunceford, I need not make any comment on his character, but leave it at the mercy of your own reflection; from which, I dare say, it will meet with as little quarter as it has found with yours always,

Bath, May 10.

Jer. Melford.

To Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton-Hall.

Dear Molly,

WE are all upon the ving—Hey for London, girl!—Fecks! we have been long enough here; for we're all turned tipsy-turvy—Mistress has excarded Sir Ulic for kicking of Chowder; and I have sent O Frizzle away, with a flea in his ear—I've shewn him how little I minded his tinsy and his long tail—A fellor, who would think for to go, for to offer, to take up with a dirty trollop under my nose—I ketched him in the very fect, coming out of the house-maid's garret.—But I have gi'en the dirty slut a siferary. O, Molly! the sarvants at Bath are devils in garnet—They light the candle at both ends. Here's nothing but ginketting, and wasting, and thieving, and tricking, and trigging; and then they are never content—They won't suffer the 'squire and mistress to stay any longer, because they have been already above three weeks in the house; and they look for a couple of ginnys a piece at our going away; and this is a parquisite they expect every month in the season; being as how no family has a right to stay longer than four weeks in the same lodgings; and so the cuck swears, she will pin the dish-clout to mistress's tail; and the house-maid vows, she'll put cowitch in master's bed, if so be he don't discamp without further ado—I don't blame them for making the most of their market, in the way of vails and parquisites; and I defy the devil to say I am a tail-carrier, or ever brought a poor sarvant into trouble—But then they oft to have some conscience, in vronging those that be
sarvants

servants like themselves—For you must no, Molly, I missed three quarters of blond lace, and a remnant of muslin, and my silver thimble; which was the gift of true love: they were all in my work-basket, that I left upon the table in the servants-hall, when mistresses bell rung; but if they had been under lock and key, 'twould have been all the same; for there are double keys to all the locks in Bath; and they say as how the very teeth an't safe in your head, if you sleep with your mouth open—And so says I to myself, *them things could not go without hands; and so I'll watch their waters*: and so I did with a witness; for then it was I found Bett confarned with O Frizzle. And as the cuck had thrown her flush at me, because I had taken part with Chowder, when he fit with the turnspit, I resolved to make a clear kitchen, and throw some of her fat into the fire. I ketched the chare-woman going out with her load in the morning, before she thought I was up, and brought her to mistress with her whole cargo—Marry, what do'st think she had got in the name of God? Her buckets were foaming full of our best bear; and her lap was stuffed with a cold tongue, part of a buttock of beef, half a turkey, and a swinging lump of butter, and the matter of ten mould kandles, that had scarce ever been lit. The cuck brazened it out, and said it was her rite to rummage the pantry; and she was ready for to go before the mare; that he had been her potticary many years, and would never think of hurting a poor servant, for giving away the scraps of the kitchen—I went another way to work with madam Betty, because she had been saucy, and called me skandalous names; and said O Frizzle could not abide me, and twenty other odorous falsehoods. I got a varrant from the mare, and her box being searched by the constable, my things came out sure enuff; besides a full pound of vax kandles, and a nite-cap

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nite-cap of mistress, that I could sware to on my cruperal oaf—O then madam Mopstick came upon her merry bones ; and as the 'squire wouldn't hare of a persecution, she scaped a skewring ; but the longest day she has to live she'll remember your humble sarvant

Bath, May 15.

Winifred Jenkins.

If the hind should come again, before we be gone, pray send me the shift and apron, with the vite gallow manky shoes ; which you'll find in my pillowber—Sarvice to Saul—

To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus College, Oxon.

You are in the right, dear Phillips ; I don't expect regular answers to every letter—I know a college life is too circumscribed to afford materials for such quick returns of communication. For my part, I am continually shifting the scene, and surrounded with new objects ; some of which are striking enough. I shall therefore conclude my journal for your amusement ; and though, in all appearance, it will not treat of very important or interesting particulars, it may prove, perhaps, not altogether un-instructive and unentertaining.

The music and entertainments of Bath are over for this season ; and all our gay birds of passage have taken their flight to Bristol-well, Tunbridge, Brighthelmstone, Scarborough, Harrowgate, &c. Not a soul is seen in this place, but a few broken-winded parsons, waddling like so many crows along the North Parade. There is always a great shew of the clergy at Bath ; none of your thin, puny, yellow, hectic figures, exhausted with abstinence and hard study, labouring under the *morbi eruditorum* ;
but

but great overgrown dignitaries and rectors, with rubicund noses and gouty ancles, or broad bloated faces, dragging along great swag-bellies; the emblems of sloth and indigestion—

Now we are upon the subject of parsons, I must tell you a ludicrous adventure, which was atchieved the other day by Tom Eastgate, whom you may remember on the foundation of Queen's. He had been very assiduous to pin himself upon George Prankley, who was a gentleman-commoner of Christ-church, knowing the said Prankley was heir to a considerable estate, and would have the advowson of a good living, the incumbent of which was very old and infirm. He studied his passions, and flattered them so effectually, as to become his companion and counsellor; and, at last, obtained of him a promise of the presentation, when the living should fall. Prankley, on his uncle's death, quitted Oxford, and made his first appearance in the fashionable world at London; from whence he came lately to Bath, where he has been exhibiting himself among the bucks and gamesters of the place. Eastgate followed him hither; but he should not have quitted him for a moment at his first emerging into life. He ought to have known he was a fantastic, foolish, fickle fellow, who would forget his college attachments the moment they ceased appealing to his senses. Tom met with a cold reception from his old friend; and was, moreover, informed, that he had promised the living to another man, who had a vote in the county, where he proposed to offer himself a candidate at the next general election. He now remembered nothing of Eastgate, but the freedoms he had used to take with him, while Tom had quietly stood his butt with an eye to the benefice; and those freedoms he began to repeat in common place sarcasms on his person and his cloth, which he uttered in the public coffee-house, for the entertainment of the company. But

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he was egregiously mistaken in giving his own wit credit for that tameness of Eastgate, which had been entirely owing to prudential considerations. These being now removed, he retorted his repartee with interest, and found no great difficulty of turning the laugh upon the aggressor; who, losing his temper, called him names, and asked, *If he knew whom he talked to?* After much altercation, Prankley, shaking his cane, bid him hold his tongue, otherwise he would dust his cassock for him. ‘I have no pretensions to such a valet, (said Tom;) but if you should do me that office, and overheat yourself, I have here a good oaken towel at your service.’

Prankley was equally incensed and confounded at this reply. After a moment’s pause, he took him aside towards the window; and, pointing to the clump of firs on Clerken-down, asked, in a whisper, if he had spirit enough to meet him there with a case of pistols at six o’clock to-morrow morning. Eastgate answered in the affirmative; and, with a steady countenance, assured him, he would not fail to give him the rendezvous at the hour he mentioned. So saying, he retired; and the challenger stayed some time in manifest agitation. In the morning, Eastgate, who knew his man, and had taken his resolution, went to Prankley’s lodgings, and roused him by five o’clock.—

The squire, in all probability, cursed his punctuality in his heart, but he affected to talk big; and having prepared his artillery over-night, they crossed the water at the end of the South Parade. In their progress up the hill, Prankley often eyed the parson, in hopes of perceiving some reluctance in his countenance; but as no such marks appeared, he attempted to intimidate him by word of mouth. ‘If these flints do their office (said he) I’ll do thy business in a few minutes.’ ‘I desire you will do your best, (replied the other;) for my part, I

‘ come not here to trifle. Our lives are in the hands
 ‘ of God ; and one of us already totters on the brink
 ‘ of eternity—’ This remark seemed to make some
 impression upon the squire, who changed counte-
 nance, and, with a faltering accent, observed,
 ‘ That it ill became a clergyman to be concerned in
 ‘ quarrels and bloodshed—’ ‘ Your insolence to
 ‘ me (said Eastgate) I should have bore with pati-
 ‘ ence, had not you cast the most infamous reflec-
 ‘ tions upon my order, the honour of which I think
 ‘ myself in duty bound to maintain, even at the ex-
 ‘ pence of my heart’s blood ; and surely it can be
 ‘ no crime to put out of the world a profligate
 ‘ wretch, without any sense of principle, morality,
 ‘ or religion——’ ‘ Thou may’st take away my life,
 ‘ (cried Prankley, in great perturbation,) but
 ‘ do’nt go to murder my character.—What ! ha’st
 ‘ got no conscience ?’ ‘ My conscience is perfectly
 ‘ quiet, (replied the other ;) and now, sir, we are
 ‘ upon the spot—Take your ground as near as you
 ‘ please ; prime your pistol ; and the Lord, of his
 ‘ infinite mercy, have compassion upon your mise-
 ‘ rable soul !’

This ejaculation he pronounced in a loud solemn
 tone, with his hat off, and his eyes lifted up ; then
 drawing a large horse pistol, he presented, and put
 himself in a posture of action. Prankley took his
 distance, and endeavoured to prime, but his hand
 shook with such violence, that he found this opera-
 tion impracticable—His antagonist, seeing how it
 was with him, offered his assistance, and advanced
 for that purpose ; when the poor ‘squire, exceed-
 ingly alarmed at what he had heard and seen, de-
 sired the action might be deferred till next day, as
 he had not settled his affairs. ‘ I ha’n’t made my
 ‘ will, (said he ;) my sisters are not provided for ;
 ‘ and I just now recollect an old promise, which my
 ‘ conscience tells me I ought to perform—I’ll first
 ‘ convince thee, that I am not a wretch without
 ‘ principle,

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principle, and then thou shalt have an opportunity to take my life, which thou seemest to thirst after so eagerly—'

Eastgate understood the hint ; and told him, that one day should break no squares ; adding, ' God forbid that I should be the means of hindering you from acting the part of an honest man, and a dutiful brother—' By virtue of this cessation, they returned peaceably together. Prankley forthwith made out the presentation of the living, and delivered it to Eastgate, telling him at the same time, he had now settled his affairs, and was ready to attend him to the Firgrove ; but Tom declared he could not think of lifting his hand against the life of so great a benefactor—He did more : when they next met at the coffee-house, he asked pardon of Mr. Prankley, if in his passion he had said any thing to give him offence ; and the 'squire was so gracious as to forgive him with a cordial shake of the hand, declaring that he did not like to be at variance with an old college companion—Next day, however, he left Bath abruptly ; and then Eastgate told me all these particulars, not a little pleased with the effects of his own sagacity, by which he has secured a living worth 160*l.* *per annum*.

Of my uncle, I have nothing at present to say ; but that we set out to-morrow for London *en famille*. He and the ladies, with the maid and Chowder, in a coach ; I and the man-servant a horseback. The particulars of our journey you shall have in my next, provided no accident happens to prevent.

Your's ever,

Bath, May 17.

J. Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Dick,

I SHALL to-morrow set out for London, where I have bespoke lodgings, at Mrs. Norton's, in Golden-square. Although I am no admirer of

Bath, I shall leave it with regret ; because I must part with some old friends, whom in all probability I shall never see again. In the course of coffee-house conversation, I had often heard very extraordinary encomiums passed on the performances of Mr. T——, a gentleman residing in this place, who paints landscapes for his amusement. As I have no great confidence in the taste and judgment of coffee-house connoisseurs, and never received much pleasure from this branch of the art, those general praises made no impression at all on my curiosity ; but, at the request of a particular friend, I went yesterday to see the pieces, which had been so warmly commended—I must own I am no judge of painting, though very fond of pictures. I don't imagine that my senses would play me so false, as to betray me into admiration of any thing that was very bad ; but, true it is, I have often overlooked capital beauties in pieces of extraordinary merit.—If I am not totally devoid of taste, however, this young gentleman of Bath is the best landscape-painter now living : I was struck with his performances in such a manner, as I had never been by painting before. His trees not only have a richness of foliage and warmth of colouring which delights the view, but also a certain magnificence in the disposition, and spirit in the expression, which I cannot describe. His management of the *chiaro obscuro*, or light and shadow, especially gleams of sun-shine, is altogether wonderful, both in the contrivance and execution ; and he is so happy in his perspective, and marking his distances at sea, by a progressive series of ships, vessels, capes, and promontories, that I could not help thinking I had a distant view of thirty leagues upon the back ground of the picture. If there is any taste for ingenuity left in a degenerate age, fast sinking into barbarism, this artist, I apprehend, will make a capital figure, as soon as his works are known.—

Two

Two days ago, I was favoured with a visit by Mr. Fitz-owen; who, with great formality, solicited my vote and interest at the general election. I ought not to have been shocked at the confidence of this man; though it was remarkable, considering what had passed between him and me on a former occasion—These visits are mere matter of form, which a candidate makes to every elector; even to those who, he knows, are engaged in the interest of his competitor, lest he should expose himself to the imputation of pride, at a time when it is expected he should appear humble. Indeed, I know nothing so abject as the behaviour of a man canvassing for a seat in parliament—This mean prostration (to borough electors, especially) has, I imagine, contributed in a great measure to raise that spirit of insolence among the vulgar; which, like the devil, will be found very difficult to lay. Be that as it may, I was in some confusion at the effrontery of Fitz-owen; but I soon recollected myself, and told him, I had not yet determined for whom I should give my vote, nor whether I should give it for any.—The truth is, I look upon both candidates in the same light; and should think myself a traitor to the constitution of my country, if I voted for either. If every elector would bring the same consideration home to his conscience, we should not have such reason to exclaim against the venality of p—ts. But we are all a pack of venal and corrupted rascals; so lost to all sense of honesty, and all tenderness of character, that in a little time, I am fully persuaded, nothing will be infamous but virtue and public spirit.

G. H—, who is really an enthusiast in patriotism, and represented the capital in several successive parliaments, declared to me t'other day, with the tears in his eyes, that he had lived above thirty years in the city of London, and dealt in the way of commerce with all the citizens of note in

their turns ; but that, as he should answer to God, he had never, in the whole course of his life, found above three or four whom he could call thoroughly honest: a declaration which was rather mortifying than surprising to me ; who have found so few men of worth in the course of my acquaintance, that they serve only as exceptions ; which, in the grammarian's phrase, confirm and prove a general canon—I know you will say, G. H—— saw imperfectly through the mist of prejudice, and I am rankled by the spleen—Perhaps, you are partly in the right ; for I have perceived that my opinion of mankind, like mercury in the thermometer, rises and falls according to the variations of the weather.

Pray settle accompts with Barnes ; take what money of mine is in his hands, and give him acquittance. If you think Davis has stock or credit enough to do justice to the farm, give him a discharge for the rent that is due : this will animate his industry ; for I know that nothing is so discouraging to a farmer, as the thoughts of being in arrears with his landlord. He becomes dispirited, and neglects his labour ; and so the farm goes to wreck. Tabby has been clamouring for some days about the lamb's skin, which Williams, the hind, begged of me when he was last at Bath. Pr'ythee take it back, paying the fellow the full value of it, that I may have some peace in my own house ; and let him keep his own counsel, if he means to keep his place—O ! I shall never presume to despise or censure any poor man for suffering himself to be hen-pecked ; conscious how I myself am obliged to truckle to a domestic dæmon ; even though (blessed be God) she is not yoked with me for life in the matrimonial waggon—She has quarrelled with the servants of the house about vails ; and such intolerable scolding ensued on both sides, that I have been fain to appease the cook and chambermaid by stealth. Can't you find some poor gentleman

Man of Wales, to take this precious commodity
off the hands of yours,

Bath, May 19.

M. Bramble.

To Dr. Lews.

Dr. Lews,

GIVE me leave to tell you, methinks you mought
employ your talons better, than to encourage ser-
vants to pillage their masters—I find by Gwyllim,
that Villiams has got my skin; for which he is an
impotent rascal. He has not only got my skin, but,
moreover, my butter-milk to fatten his pigs; and,
I suppose, the next thing he gets, will be my pad to
carry his daughter to church and fair: Roger gets
this, and Roger gets that; but I'd have you to
know, I won't be rogered at this rate by any rag-
matical fellow in the kingdom—And I am surpris'd,
docter Lews, you would offer to put my affairs in
composition with the refuse and skim of the hearth.
I have toiled and moyled to a good purpuss, for the
advantage of Matt's family, if I can't save as much
owl as will make me an under petticoat. As for
the butter-milk, ne'er a pig in the parish shall thrust
his snout in it, with my good-will. There's a fa-
mous physican at the Hot Well, that prescribes it
to his patience, when the case is consumptive; and
the Scots and Irish have begun to drink it already,
in such quantities, that there is not a drop left for
the hogs in the whole neighbourhood of Bristol.
I'll have our butter-milk barrelled up, and sent
twice a-week to Aberginny, where it may be sold
for a halfpenny the quart; so Roger may carry his
pigs to another market—I hope, Docter, you will
not go to put any more such phims in my brother's
head, to the prejudice of my pocket; but rather
give me some raisans (which hitherto you have not
done) to subscribe myself

Bath, May 19.

your humble servant,

Tab. Bramble.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus College, Oxon.

Dear Phillips,

WITHOUT waiting for your answer to my last, I proceed to give you an account of our journey to London, which has not been wholly barren of adventure. Tuesday last, the squire took his place in a hired coach and four, accompanied by his sister and mine, and Mrs. Tabby's maid, Winifred Jenkins, whose province it was to support Chowder on a cushion in her lap. I could scarce refrain from laughing, when I looked into the vehicle, and saw that animal sitting opposite to my uncle, like any other passenger. The squire, ashamed of his situation, blushed to the eyes; and calling to the postillions to drive on, pulled the glass up in my face. I, and his servant John Thomas, attended them on horseback.

Nothing worth mentioning occurred, till we arrived on the edge of Marlborough Downs. There one of the fore horses fell, in going down hill at a round trot; and the postilion behind, endeavouring to stop the carriage, pulled it on one side into a deep rut, where it was fairly overturned. I had rode on about two hundred yards before; but, hearing a loud scream, galloped back and dismounted, to give what assistance was in my power. When I looked into the coach, I could see nothing distinctly, but the nether end of Jenkins, who was kicking her heels and squalling with great vociferation. All of a sudden, my uncle thrust up his bare pate, and bolted through the window, as nimble as a grass-hopper, having made use of poor Win's posteriors as a step to rise in his ascent—The man (who had likewise quitted his horse) dragged this forlorn damsel, more dead than alive, through the same opening. Then Mr. Bramble pulling the door off its hinges with a jerk, laid hold on Liddy's arm, and brought her to the light; very much
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frighted, but little hurt. It fell to my share to deliver our aunt Tabitha, who had lost her cap in the struggle; and being rather more than half frantic, with rage and terror, was no bad representation of one of the sister Furies that guard the gates of hell—She expressed no sort of concern for her brother, who ran about in the cold, without his periwig, and worked with the most astonishing agility, in helping to disentangle the horses from the carriage: but she cried in a tone of distraction, ‘Chowder! Chowder! my dear Chowder! my poor Chowder! is certainly killed!’

This was not the case—Chowder, after having tore my uncle’s leg in the confusion of the fall, had retreated under the seat, and from thence the footman drew him by the neck; for which good office, he bit his fingers to the bone. The fellow, who is naturally furly, was so provoked at this assault, that he saluted his ribs with a hearty kick, exclaiming, ‘Damn the nasty son of a bitch, and them he belongs to!’ A benediction, which was by no means lost upon the implacable virago his mistress—Her brother, however, prevailed upon her to retire into a peasant’s house, near the scene of action, where his head and her’s were covered, and poor Jenkins had a fit—Our next care was to apply some sticking plaister to the wound in his leg, which exhibited the impression of Chowder’s teeth; but he never opened his lips against the delinquent—Mrs. Tabby, alarmed at this scene, ‘You say nothing, Matt, (cried she;) but I know your mind—I know the spite you have to that poor unfortunate animal! I know you intend to take his life away!’ ‘You are mistaken, upon my honour!’ (replied the squire, with a sarcastic smile;) ‘I should be incapable of harbouring any such cruel design against an object so amiable and inoffensive; even if he had not the happiness to be your favourite.’

John

John Thomas was not so delicate. The fellow, whether really alarmed for his life, or instigated by the desire of revenge, came in, and bluntly demanded, that the dog should be put to death; on the supposition, that if ever he should run mad hereafter, he, who had been bit by him, would be infected. My uncle calmly argued upon the absurdity of his opinion, observing, that he himself was in the same predicament, and would certainly take the precaution he proposed, if he was not sure he ran no risque of infection. Nevertheless, Thomas continued obstinate; and at length declared, that if the dog was not shot immediately, he himself would be his executioner. This declaration opened the flood-gates of Tabby's eloquence, which would have shamed the first-rate orators of Billingsgate. The footman retorted in the same style; and the squire dismissed him from his service, after having prevented me from giving him a good horse-whipping for his insolence.

The coach being adjusted, another difficulty occurred—Mrs. Tabitha absolutely refused to enter it again, unless another driver could be found to take the place of the postilion; who, she affirmed, had overturned the carriage from malice aforethought. After much dispute, the man resigned his place to a shabby country fellow, who undertook to go as far as Marlborough, where they could be better provided; and at that place we arrived about one o'clock, without farther impediment. Mrs. Bramble, however, found new matter of offence; which, indeed, she had a particular genius for extracting at will from almost every incident in life. We had scarce entered the room at Marlborough, where we stayed to dine, when she exhibited a formal complaint against the poor fellow who had superceded the postilion. She said, he was such a beggarly rascal, that he had ne'er a shirt to his back; and had the impudence to shock her sight by shewing

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ing his bare posteriors, for which act of indelicacy he deserved to be set in the stocks. Mrs. Winifred Jenkins confirmed the assertion, with respect to his nakedness, observing, at the same time, that he had a skin as fair as alabaster.

‘This is a heinous offence, indeed, (cried my uncle:) let us hear what the fellow has to say in his own vindication.’ He was accordingly summoned, and made his appearance, which was equally queer and pathetic. He seemed to be about twenty years of age, of a middling size, with bandy legs, stooping shoulders, high forehead, sandy locks, pinkish eyes, flat nose, and long chin—but his complexion was of a sickly yellow: his looks denoted famine; and the rags that he wore could hardly conceal what decency requires to be covered. My uncle, having surveyed him attentively, said, with an ironical expression in his countenance, ‘An’t you ashamed, fellow, to ride postilion without a shirt to cover your backside from the view of the ladies in the coach?’ ‘Yes, I am, an please your noble honour, (answered the man;) but necessity has no law, as the saying is: And more than that, it was an accident—My breeches cracked behind after I had got into the saddle—’ ‘You’re an impudent varlet, (cried Mrs. Tabby,) for presuming to ride before persons of fashion without a shirt—’ ‘I am so, an please your worthy ladyship, (said he;) but I’m a poor Wiltshire lad. I ha’n’t a shirt in the world, that I can call my own, nor a rag of cloaths, an please your ladyship, but what you see. I have no friend nor relation upon earth to help me out. I have had the fever and ague these six months, and spent all I had in the world upon doctors, and to keep soul and body together; and, saving your ladyship’s good presence, I han’t broke bread these four and twenty hours—’

Mrs. Bramble, turning from him, said, she had never seen such a filthy tatterdemalion, and bid him
be

be gone; observing, that he would fill the room full of vermin. Her brother darted a significant glance at her, as she retired with Liddy into another apartment; and then asked the man if he was known to any person in Marlborough? When he answered, that the landlord of the inn had known him from his infancy, mine host was immediately called, and being interrogated on the subject, declared that the young fellow's name was Humphry Clinker. That he had been a love-begotten babe, brought up in the workhouse, and put out apprentice by the parish to a country blacksmith, who died before the boy's time was out: that he had for some time worked under his ostler, as a helper and extra postilion, till he was taken ill of the ague, which disabled him from getting his bread: that, having sold or pawned every thing he had in the world for his cure and subsistence, he became so miserable and shabby, that he disgraced the stable, and was dismissed; but that he never heard any thing to the prejudice of his character in other respects. 'So that the fellow being sick and destitute (said my uncle) you turned him out to die in the streets.' 'I pay the poor's rate, (replied the other,) and I have no right to maintain idle vagrants, either in sickness or health; besides, such a miserable object would have brought a discredit upon my house.'

'You perceive (said the squire, turning to me) our landlord is a Christian of bowels. Who shall presume to censure the morals of the age, when the very publicans exhibit such examples of humanity? Hark ye, Clinker, you are a most notorious offender—You stand convicted of sickness, hunger, wretchedness, and want. But, as it does not belong to me to punish criminals, I will only take upon me the task of giving you a word of advice—Get a shirt with all convenient dispatch, that your nakedness may not henceforward give offence to travelling gentlewomen, especially maidens in years—'

So saying, he put a guinea into the hand of the poor fellow, who stood staring at him in silence, with his mouth wide open, till the landlord pushed him out of the room.

In the afternoon, as our aunt stepped into the coach, she observed, with some marks of satisfaction, that the postillion, who rode next to her, was not a shabby wretch, like the ragamuffin who had drove them into Marlborough. Indeed, the difference was very conspicuous: this was a smart fellow, with a narrow brimmed hat, and gold cording, a cut bob, a decent blue jacket, leather breeches, and a clean linen shirt, puffed above the waistband. When we arrived at the castle on Spin-hill, where we lay, this new postillion was remarkably assiduous in bringing in the loose parcels; and, at length, displayed the individual countenance of Humphry Clinker, who had metamorphosed himself in this manner, by relieving from pawn part of his own cloaths with the money he had received from Mr. Bramble.

Howsoever pleased the rest of the company were with such a favourable change in the appearance of this poor creature, it soured on the stomach of Mrs. Tabby, who had not yet digested the affront of his naked skin—She tossed her nose in disdain, saying, she supposed her brother had taken him into favour, because he had insulted her with his obscenity; that a fool and his money were soon parted; but that if Matt intended to take the fellow with him to London, she would not go a foot farther that way—My uncle said nothing with his tongue, though his looks were sufficiently expressive; and next morning Clinker did not appear, so that we proceeded without farther altercation to Salt-hill, where we proposed to dine—There the first person that came to the side of the coach, and began to adjust the foot-board, was no other than Humphry Clinker—When I handed out Mrs. Bramble, she eyed him

with a furious look, and passed into the house—My uncle was embarrassed, and asked him peevishly, what had brought him hither? The fellow said, his honour had been so good to him, that he had not the heart to part with him; that he would follow him to the world's end, and serve him all the days of his life without fee or reward—

Mr. Bramble did not know whether to chide or laugh at this declaration—He foresaw much contradiction on the side of Tabby; and, on the other hand, he could not but be pleased with the gratitude of Clinker, as well as with the simplicity of his character—‘Suppose I was inclined to take you into my service (said he) what are your qualifications? what are you good for?’ ‘An please your honour, (answered this original,) I can read and write, and do the business of the stable indifferent well—I can dress a horse and shoe him, and bleed and rowel him: and as for the practice of sow gelding, I won’t turn my back on e’er a he in the county of Wilts—Then I can make hog’s-puddings and hob-nails, mend kettles, and tin saucepans—’ Here uncle burst out a-laughing; and enquired what other accomplishments he was master of—‘I know something of single-stick, and psalmody, (proceeded Clinker.) I can play upon the Jew’s-harp, sing Black-ey’d Susan, Arthur-o’Bradley, and divers other songs; I can dance a Welch jig, and Nancy Dawson; wrestle a fall with any lad of my inches, when I’m in heart; and, under correction, I can find a hare, when your honour wants a bit of game.’ ‘Foregad! thou art a complete fellow, (cried my uncle, still laughing.) I have a good mind to take thee into my family—Pri’ythee, go and try if thou can’st make peace with my sister—Thou ha’st given her much offence by shewing her thy naked tail.’

Clinker accordingly followed us into the room, cap in hand, where addressing himself to Mrs. Tabitha, ‘May it please your ladyship’s worship (cried he)

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HUMPHREY CLINKER.
Tabitha Bramble enraged at the
awkwardness of Humphrey Clinker.
Vide Volume I Page 111.

Drawn by J. Allen, Engraved by J. Saunders for C. & Co. Feb. 1799.

he) to pardon and forgive my offences, and with God's assistance, I shall take care that my tail shall never rise up in judgment against me to offend your ladyship again—Do, pray, good sweet, beautiful lady, take compassion on a poor sinner—God blefs your noble countenance; I am sure you are too handsome and generous to bear malice—I will serve you on my bended knees, by night and by day, by land and by water; and all for the love and pleasure of serving such an excellent lady—

This compliment and humiliation had some effect upon Tabby; but she made no reply; and Clinker, taking silence for consent, gave his attendance at dinner. The fellow's natural awkwardness, and the flutter of his spirits, were productive of repeated blunders in the course of his attendance—At length, he spilt part of a custard upon her right shoulder; and, starting back, trod upon Chowder, who sat up a dismal howl!—Poor Humphry was so disconcerted at this double mistake, that he dropt the china-dish, which broke into a thousand pieces; then falling down upon his knees, remained in that posture gaping, with a most ludicrous aspect of distress—Mrs. Bramble flew to the dog, and, snatching him up in her arms, presented him to her brother, saying, 'This is all a concerted scheme against this unfortunate animal, whose only crime is its regard for me—Here it is: kill it at once; and then you'll be satisfied.'

Clinker hearing these words, and taking them in the literal acceptation, got up in some hurry, and, seizing a knife from the side-board, cried, 'Not here, an please your ladyship—It will daub the room—Give him to me, and I'll carry him in the ditch by the road-side—' To this proposal he received no other answer than a hearty box on the ear, that made him stagger to the other side of the room. 'What! (said she to her brother) am I to be affronted by every mangy hound that you pick up

in the high-way? I insist upon your sending this rascallion about his business immediately—' 'For God's sake, sister, compose yourself, (said my uncle,) and consider, that the poor fellow is innocent of any intention to give you offence—' 'Innocent as the babe unborn—' (cried Humphry.) 'I see it plainly (exclaimed this implacable maiden,) he acts by your direction; and you are resolved to support him in his impudence—This is a bad return for all the services I have done you; for nursing you in your sickness, managing your family, and keeping you from ruining yourself by your own imprudence—But now you shall part with that rascal or me, upon the spot, without farther loss of time; and the world shall see whether you have more regard for your own flesh and blood, or for a beggarly foundling, taken from the dunghill.—'

Mr. Bramble's eyes began to glisten, and his teeth to chatter. 'If stated fairly, (said he, raising his voice,) the question is, whether I have spirit to shake off an intolerable yoke, by one effort of resolution, or meanness enough to do an act of cruelty and injustice, to gratify the rancour of a capricious woman—Heark ye, Mrs. Tabitha Bramble, I will now propose an alternative in my turn—Either discard your four-footed favourite, or give me leave to bid you eternally adieu—For I am determined that he and I shall live no longer under the same roof; and now to dinner with *what appetite you may*—' Thunder-struck at this declaration, she sat down in a corner; and, after a pause of some minutes, 'Sure I don't understand you, Matt!' (said she.) 'And yet I spoke in plain English—' answered the 'squire, with a peremptory look. 'Sir, (resumed this virago, effectually humbled,) it is your prerogative to command, and my duty to obey. I can't dispose of the dog in this place; but if you'll allow him to go in the coach to London, I give you my word, he shall never trouble you again—' Her

Her brother, entirely disarmed by this mild reply, declared, she could ask him nothing in reason that he would refuse; adding, 'I hope, sister, you have never found me deficient in natural affection.' Mrs. Tabitha immediately rose, and, throwing her arms about his neck, kissed him on the cheek: he returned her embrace with great emotion. Liddy sobbed, Wm. Jenkins cackled, Chowder capered, and Clinker skipped about, rubbing his hands for joy of this reconciliation.

Concord being thus restored, we finished our meal with comfort; and in the evening arrived at London, without having met with any other adventure. My aunt seems to be much mended by the hint she received from her brother. She has been graciously pleased to remove her displeasure from Clinker, who is now retained as a footman; and in a day or two will make his appearance in a new suit of livery; but as he is little acquainted with London, we have taken an occasional valet, whom I intend hereafter to hire as my own servant. We lodge in Golden-square, at the house of one Mrs. Norton, a decent sort of a woman, who takes great pains to make us all easy. My uncle proposes to make a circuit of all the remarkable scenes of this metropolis, for the entertainment of his pupils; but as both you and I are already acquainted with most of those he will visit, and with some others he little dreams of, I shall only communicate what will be in some measure new to your observation. Remember me to our Jesuitical friends, and believe me ever,

Dear knight,

your's affectionately,

London, May 24.

J. Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Doctor,

LONDON is literally new to me; new in its streets, houses, and even in its situation; as the Irish-

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man

man said, 'London is now gone out of town.' What I left open fields, producing hay and corn, I now find covered with streets, and squares, and palaces, and churches. I am credibly informed, that in the space of seven years, eleven thousand new houses have been built in one quarter of Westminster, exclusive of what is daily added to other parts of this unwieldy metropolis. Pimlico and Knightsbridge are now almost joined to Chelsea and Kensington; and if this infatuation continues for half a century, I suppose the whole county of Middlesex will be covered with brick.

It must be allowed, indeed, for the credit of the present age, that London and Westminster are much better paved and lighted than they were formerly. The new streets are spacious, regular, and airy; and the houses generally convenient. The bridge at Black-friars is a noble monument of taste and public spirit—I wonder how they stumbled upon a work of such magnificence and utility. But, notwithstanding the improvements, the capital is become an overgrown monster; which, like a dropsical head, will in time leave the body and extremities without nourishment and support. The absurdity will appear in its full force, when we consider, that one sixth part of the natives of this whole extensive kingdom is crowded within the bills of mortality. What wonder that our villages are depopulated, and our farms in want of day-labourers? The abolition of small farms is but one cause of the decrease of population. Indeed, the incredible increase of horses and black cattle, to answer the purposes of luxury, requires a prodigious quantity of hay and grass, which are raised and managed without much labour; but a number of hands will always be wanted for the different branches of agriculture, whether the farms be large or small. The tide of luxury has swept all the inhabitants from the open country—The poorest

est 'squire, as well as the richest peer, must have his house in town, and make a figure with an extraordinary number of domestics. The plough-boys, cow-herds, and lower-hinds, are debauched and seduced by the appearance and discourse of those coxcombs in livery, when they make their summer excursions. They desert their dirt and drudgery, and swarm up to London, in hopes of getting into service, where they can live luxuriously, and wear fine cloaths, without being obliged to work; for idleness is natural to man—Great numbers of these being disappointed in their expectation, become thieves and sharpers; and London, being an immense wilderness, in which there is neither watch nor ward of any signification, nor any order of police, affords them lurking places as well as prey.

There are many causes that contribute to the daily increase of this enormous mass; but they may be all resolved into the grand source of luxury and corruption—About five and twenty years ago, very few, even of the most opulent citizens of London, kept any equipage, or even any servants in livery. Their tables produced nothing but plain boiled and roasted, with a bottle of port and a tankard of beer. At present, every trader in any degree of credit, every broker and attorney, maintains a couple of footmen, a coachman, and postillion. He has his town-house, and his country-house, his coach, and his post-chaise. His wife and daughters appear in the richest stuffs, bespangled with diamonds. They frequent the court, the opera, the theatre, and the masquerade. They hold assemblies at their own houses: they make sumptuous entertainments, and treat with the richest wines of Bourdeaux, Burgundy, and Champagne. The substantial tradesman, who was wont to pass his evenings at the alehouse for fourpence-halfpenny, now spends three shillings at the tavern, while his wife keeps card-tables at home; she must likewise have
fine

fine cloaths, her chaise, or pad, with country lodgings, and go three times a-week to public diversions. Every clerk, apprentice, and even waiter of tavern or coffee-house, maintains a gelding by himself, or in partnership, and assumes the air and apparel of a *petit-maitre*—The gayest places of public entertainment are filled with fashionable figures; which, upon inquiry, will be found to be journey-men taylors, serving-men, and Abigails, disguised like their betters.

In short, there is no distinction or subordination left—The different departments of life are jumbled together—The hod-carrier, the low mechanic, the tapster, the publican, the shop-keeper, the pettifogger, the citizen, and courtier, *all tread upon the knees of one another*: actuated by the demons of profligacy and licentiousness, they are seen every where, rambling, riding, rolling, rushing, jostling, mixing, bouncing, cracking, and crashing, in one vile ferment of stupidity and corruption—All is tumult and hurry; one would imagine they were impelled by some disorder of the brain, that will not suffer them to be at rest. The foot-passengers run along as if they were pursued by bailiffs. The porters and chairmen trot with their burthens. People, who keep their own equipages, drive through the streets at full speed. Even citizens, physicians, and apothecaries, glide in their chariots like lightning. The hackney-coachmen make their horses smoke, and the pavement shakes under them; and I have actually seen a waggon pass through Piccadilly at the hand gallop. In a word, the whole nation seems to be running out of their wits.

The diversions of the times are not ill suited to the genius of this incongruous monster, called *the public*. Give it noise, confusion, glare, and glitter; it has no idea of elegance and propriety—What are the amusements at Ranelagh? One half of the company are following one another's tails, in an
eternal

eternal circle, like so many blind asses in an olive-mill, where they can neither discourse, distinguish, nor be distinguished; while the other half are drinking hot water, under the denomination of tea, till nine or ten o'clock at night, to keep them awake for the rest of the evening. As for the orchestra, the vocal music especially, it is well for the performers that they cannot be heard distinctly. Vauxhall is a composition of baubles, overcharged with paltry ornaments, ill conceived, and poorly executed, without any unity of design or propriety of disposition. It is an unnatural assemblage of objects, fantastically illuminated in broken masses; seemingly contrived to dazzle the eyes and divert the imagination of the vulgar—Here a wooden lion, there a stone statue: in one place a range of things like coffee-house boxes, covered a-top; in another, a parcel of ale-house benches; in a third, a puppet-show representation of a tin cascade; in a fourth, a gloomy cave of a circular form, like a sepulchral vault half lighted; in a fifth, a scanty slip of grass-plot, that would not afford pasture sufficient for an ass's colt. The walks, which nature seems to have intended for solitude, shade, and silence, are filled with crowds of noisy people, sucking up the nocturnal rheums of an aguish climate; and through these gay scenes a few lamps glimmer like so many farthing candles.

When I see a number of well-dressed people, of both sexes, sitting on the covered benches, exposed to the eyes of the mob, and, which is worse, to the cold, raw, night air, devouring sliced beef, and swilling port, and punch, and cyder, I can't help compassionating their temerity, while I despise their want of taste and decorum; but when they course along those damp and gloomy walks, or crowd together upon the wet gravel, without any other cover than the cope of Heaven, listening to a song, which one half of them cannot possibly hear, how
can

can I help supposing they are actually possessed by a spirit more absurd and pernicious than any thing we meet with in the precincts of Bedlam? In all probability, the proprietors of this, and other public gardens of inferior note, in the skirts of the metropolis, are, in some shape, connected with the faculty of physic, and the company of undertakers; for, considering that eagerness in the pursuit of what is called pleasure, which now predominates through every rank and denomination of life, I am persuaded, that more gout, rheumatisms, catarrhs, and consumptions, are caught in these nocturnal pastimes, *sub dio*, than from all the risques and accidents to which a life of toil and danger is exposed.

These, and other observations, which I have made in this excursion, will shorten my stay at London, and send me back with a double relish to my solitude and mountains; but I shall return by a different route than that which brought me to town. I have seen some old friends, who constantly resided in this virtuous metropolis, but they are so changed in manners and disposition, that we hardly know or care for one another—In our journey from Bath, my sister Tabby provoked me into a transport of passion; during which, like a man who has drank himself pot-valiant, I talked to her in such a style of authority and resolution, as produced a most blessed effect. She and her dog have been remarkably quiet and orderly ever since this expostulation. How long this agreeable calm will last, Heaven above knows—I flatter myself, the exercise of travelling has been of service to my health; a circumstance which encourages me to proceed in my projected expedition to the North. But I must, in the mean time, for the benefit and amusement of my pupils, explore the depths of the chaos; this mishapen and monstrous capital, without head or tail, members or proportion.

Thomas

Thomas was so insolent to my sister on the road that I was obliged to turn him off abruptly, betwixt Chippenham and Marlborough, where our coach was over-turned. The fellow was always fullen and selfish; but if he should return to the country, you may give him a character for honesty and sobriety; and, provided he behaves with proper respect to the family, let him have a couple of guineas in the name of

Your's always,

London, May 29.

Matt. Bramble.

To Miss Lætitia Willis, at Gloucester.

My dear Letty,

INEXPRESSIBLE was the pleasure I received from your's of the 25th, which was last night put into my hands by Mrs. Brentwood, the milliner, from Gloucester—I rejoice to hear that my worthy governess is in good health, and still more, that she no longer retains any displeasure towards her poor Liddy. I am sorry you have lost the society of the agreeable Miss Vaughan; but, I hope, you won't have cause much longer to regret the departure of your school-companions, as I make no doubt but your parents will, in a little time, bring you into the world, where you are so well qualified to make a distinguished figure. When that is the case, I flatter myself you and I shall meet again and be happy together; and even improve the friendship which we contracted in our tender years—This at least I can promise—It shall not be for the want of my utmost endeavours if our intimacy does not continue for life.

About five days ago we arrived in London, after an easy journey from Bath; during which, however, we were overturned, and met with some other little incidents, which had like to have occasioned a misunderstanding betwixt my uncle and aunt; but now, thank God, they are happily reconciled;

conciled: we live in harmony together, and every day make parties to see the wonders of this vast metropolis, which, however, I cannot pretend to describe; for I have not as yet seen a one hundredth part of its curiosities, and I am quite in a maze of admiration.

The cities of London and Westminster are spread out to an incredible extent. The streets, squares, rows, lanes, and alleys, are innumerable. Palaces, public buildings, and churches, rise in every quarter; and, among these last, St. Paul's appears with the most astonishing pre-eminence. They say it is not so large as St. Peter's at Rome; but, for my own part, I can have no idea of any earthly temple more grand and magnificent.

But even these superb objects are not so striking as the crowds of people that swarm in the streets. I at first imagined that some great assembly was just dismissed, and wanted to stand aside till the multitude should pass; but this human tide continues to flow, without interruption or abatement, from morn to night. Then there is such an infinity of gay equipages, coaches, chariots, chaises, and other carriages, continually rolling and shifting before your eyes, that one's head grows giddy looking at them; and the imagination is quite confounded with splendour and variety. Nor is the prospect by water less grand and astonishing than that by land; you see three stupendous bridges, joining the opposite banks of a broad, deep, and rapid river; so vast, so stately, so elegant, that they seem to be the work of the giants; betwixt them, the whole surface of the Thames is covered with small vessels, barges, boats, and wherries, passing to and fro; and below the three bridges, such a prodigious forest of masts, for miles together, that you would think all the ships in the universe were here assembled. All that you read of wealth and grandeur in the Arabian Night's Entertainment
and

and the Persian Tales, concerning Bagdad, Diarbekir, Damascus, Ispahan, and Samarkand, is here realised.

Renelagh looks like the enchanted palace of a genii, adorned with the most exquisite performances of painting, carving, and gilding; enlightened with a thousand golden lamps, that emulate the noon-day sun; crowded with the great, the rich, the gay, the happy, and the fair; glittering with cloth of gold and silver, lace, embroidery, and precious stones. While these exulting sons and daughters of felicity tread this round of pleasure, or regale in different parties, and separate lodges, with fine imperial tea, and other delicious refreshments, their ears are entertained with the most ravishing delights of music, both instrumental and vocal. There I heard the famous Tenducci, a thing from Italy—It looks for all the world like a man, though they say it is not. The voice, to be sure, is neither man's nor woman's; but it is more melodious than either; and it warbled so divinely, that, while I listened, I really thought myself in paradise.

At nine o'clock, in a charming moonlight evening, we embarked at Ranelagh for Vauxhall, in a wherry, so light and slender, that we looked like so many fairies sailing in a nut-shell. My uncle, being apprehensive of catching cold upon the water, went round in the coach, and my aunt would have accompanied him, but he would not suffer me to go by water if she went by land; and therefore she favoured us with her company, as she perceived I had a curiosity to make this agreeable voyage.—After all, the vessel was sufficiently loaded; for, besides the waterman, there was my brother Jerry, and a friend of his, one Mr. Barton, a country gentleman of a good fortune, who had dined at our house—The pleasure of this little excursion was, however, damped, by my being sadly frightened at

our landing; where there was a terrible confusion of wherries, and a crowd of people bawling, and swearing, and quarrelling; nay, a parcel of ugly-looking fellows came running into the water, and laid hold of our boat with great violence, to pull it a-shore; nor would they quit their hold till my brother struck one of them over the head with his cane. But this flutter was fully recompenced by the pleasures of Vauxhall; which I no sooner entered, than I was dazzled and confounded with the variety of beauties that rushed all at once upon my eye. Image to yourself, my dear Letty, a spacious garden, part laid out in delightful walks, bounded with high hedges and trees, and paved with gravel; part exhibiting a wonderful assemblage of the most picturesque and striking objects, pavillions, lodges, groves, grottos, lawns, temples, and cascades; porticoes, colonades, and rotundos; adorned with pillars, statues, and paintings; the whole illuminated with an infinite number of lamps, disposed in different figures of suns, stars, and constellations: the place crowded with the gayest company, ranging through those blissful shades, or supping in different lodges on cold collations, enlivened with mirth, freedom, and good-humour, and animated by an excellent band of music. Among the vocal performers, I had the happiness to hear the celebrated Mrs. —, whose voice was so loud and shrill, that it made my head ache through excess of pleasure.

In about half an hour after we arrived we were joined by my uncle, who did not seem to relish the place. People of experience and infirmity, my dear Letty, see with very different eyes from those that such as you and I make use of.—Our evening's entertainment was interrupted by an unlucky accident. In one of the remotest walks we were surprised with a sudden shower, that set the whole company a-running, and drove us in heaps one

upon

upon another into the rotunda; where my uncle, finding himself wet, began to be very peevish and urgent to be gone. My brother went to look for the coach, and found it with much difficulty; but as it could not hold us all, Mr. Barton stayed behind. It was some time before the carriage could be brought up to the gate, in the confusion, notwithstanding the utmost endeavours of our new footman, Humphry Clinker, who lost his scratch periwig, and got a broken head in the scuffle. The moment we were seated, my aunt pulled off my uncle's shoes, and carefully wrapped his poor feet in her capuchin; then she gave him a mouthful of cordial, which she always keeps in her pocket, and his cloaths were shifted as soon as we arrived at our lodgings; so that, blessed be God, he escaped a severe cold, of which he was in great terror.

As for Mr. Barton, I must tell you in confidence, he was a little particular; but, perhaps, I mistake his complaisance; and I wish I may for his sake—You know the condition of my poor heart; which, in spight of hard usage—And yet I ought not to complain; nor will I, till farther information.

Besides Ranelagh and Vauxhall, I have been at Mrs. Cornely's assembly, which, for the rooms, the company, the dresses, and decorations, surpasses all description; but as I have no great turn for card-playing, I have not yet entered thoroughly into the spirit of the place: indeed, I am still such a country Hoyden, that I could hardly find patience to be put in a condition to appear, yet I was not above six hours under the hands of the hair-dresser, who stuffed my head with as much black wool as would have made a quilted petticoat; and, after all, it was the smallest head in the assembly, except my aunt's.—She, to be sure, was so particular with her rump gown and petticoat, her scanty curls, her lappet-head, deep-triple ruffles, and high stays, that every body looked at her with surprise:

some whispered, and some tittered : and lady Gris-kin, by whom we were introduced, flatly told her, she was twenty good years behind the fashion.

Lady Gris-kin is a person of fashion, to whom we have the honour to be related. She keeps a small rout at her own house, never exceeding ten or a dozen card-tables, but these are frequented by the best company in town—She has been so obliging as to introduce my aunt and me to some of her particular friends of quality, who treat us with the most familiar good-humour : we have once dined with her, and she takes the trouble to direct us in all our motions. I am so happy as to have gained her good-will to such a degree, that she sometimes adjusts my cap with her own hands ; and she has given me a kind invitation to stay with her all the winter. This, however, has been cruelly declined by my uncle, who seems to be (I know not how) prejudiced against the good lady ; for, whenever my aunt happens to speak in her commendation, I observe that he makes wry faces, though he says nothing.—Perhaps, indeed, these grimaces may be the effect of pain arising from the gout and rheumatism, with which he is sadly distressed—To me, however, he is always good-natured and generous, even beyond my wish. Since we came hither, he has made me a present of a suit of cloaths, with trimmings and laces, which cost more money than I shall mention ; and Jerry, at his desire, has given me my mother's diamond drops, which are ordered to be set a-new ; so that it won't be his fault if I do not glitter among the stars of the fourth or fifth magnitude. I wish my weak head may not grow giddy in the midst of all this gallantry and dissipation ! though, as yet, I can safely declare, I could gladly give up all these tumultuous pleasures, for country solitude, and a happy retreat with those we love ; among whom my dear Willis will always possess the first place in the breast of her ever affectionate

Lydia Melford.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus College, Oxon.

Dear Phillips,

I SEND you this letter, franked by our old friend Barton; who is as much altered as it was possible for a man of his kidney to be—Instead of the careless indolent sloven we knew at Oxford, I found him a busy talkative politician; a *petit-maitre* in his dress, and a ceremonious courtier in his manners. He has not gall enough in his constitution to be inflamed with the rancour of party, so as to deal in scurrilous invectives; but, since he obtained a place, he is become a warm partizan of the ministry, and sees every thing through such an exaggerating medium, as to me, who am happily of no party, is altogether incomprehensible—Without all doubt the fumes of faction not only disturb the faculty of reason, but also pervert the organs of sense; and I would lay a hundred guineas to ten, that if Barton on one side, and the most conscientious patriot in the opposition on the other, were to draw, upon honour, the picture of the k—— or m——, you and I, who are still uninfected, and unbiassed, would find both painters equally distant from the truth. One thing, however, must be allowed for the honour of Barton, he never breaks out into illiberal abuse, far less endeavours, by infamous calumnies, to blast the moral character of any individual on the other side.

Ever since we came hither, he has been remarkably assiduous in his attention to our family; an attention, which, in a man of his indolence and avocations, I should have thought altogether odd, and even unnatural, had not I perceived that my sister Liddy has made some impression upon his heart. I can't say that I have any objection to his trying his fortune in this pursuit: if an opulent estate and a great flock of good-nature are sufficient qualifications in a husband to render the marriage-state happy for life, she may be happy with Barton; but, I

imagine, there is something else required to engage and secure the affection of a woman of sense and delicacy; something which nature has denied our friend—Liddy seems to be of the same opinion. When he addresses himself to her in discourse, she seems to listen with reluctance, and industriously avoids all particular communication; but in proportion to her coyness, our aunt is coming. Mrs. Tabitha goes more than half way to meet his advances; she mistakes, or affects to mistake, the meaning of his courtesy, which is rather formal and fullsome; she returns his compliments with hyperbolical interest, she persecutes him with her civilities at table, she appeals to him for ever in conversation; she sighs, and flirts, and ogles, and, by her hideous affectation and impertinence, drives the poor courtier to the very extremity of his complaisance: in short, she seems to have undertaken the siege of Barton's heart, and carries on her approaches in such a desperate manner, that I don't know whether he will not be obliged to capitulate. In the mean time, his aversion to this inamorata struggling with his acquired affability, and his natural fear of giving offence, throws him into a kind of distress which is extremely ridiculous.

Two days ago, he persuaded my uncle and me to accompany him to St. James's, where he undertook to make us acquainted with the persons of all the great men in the kingdom: and, indeed, there was a great assemblage of distinguished characters, for it was a high festival at court. Our conductor performed his promise with great punctuality. He pointed out almost every individual of both sexes, and generally introduced them to our notice with a flourish of panegyrick—Seeing the king approach, 'There comes (said he) the most amiable sovereign that ever swayed the sceptre of England; the *delicia humani generis*; Augustus, in patronising merit; Titus Vespasian, in generosity; Trajan, in beneficence;

eeence; and Marcus Aurelius, in philosophy. "A very honest kind-hearted gentleman, (added my uncle;) he's too good for the times. A king of England should have a spice of the devil in his composition.' Barton then turning to the duke of C—, proceeded,—' You know the duke; that illustrious hero, who trod rebellion under his feet, and secured us in possession of every thing we ought to hold dear as Englishmen and Christians. Mark what an eye, how penetrating, yet pacific! what dignity in his mien! what humanity in his aspect—Even malice must own, that he is one of the greatest officers in Christendom.' 'I think he be, (said Mr. Bramble;) but who are these young gentlemen that stand beside him?' 'Those! (cried our friend,) those are his royal nephews; the princes of the blood. Sweet young princes! the sacred pledges of the Protestant line; so spirited, so sensible, so princely—' 'Yes; very sensible! very spirited!' (says my uncle, interrupting him.) 'But see the queen! ha, there's the queen! Let me see—Let me see—Where are my glasses? Ha! there's meaning in that eye—There's sentiment--There's expression'--'Well, Mr. Barton, what figure do you call next?' The next person he pointed out was the favourite *yearl*, who stood solitary by one of the windows—'Behold yon northern star (said he) *storn of his beams*—' 'What! the Caledonian luminary, that lately blazed so bright in our hemisphere! methinks, at present, it glimmers through a fog; like Saturn without his ring, bleak, and dim, and distant—Ha, there's the other great phenomenon, the grand pensionary, that weather-cock of patriotism, that veers about in every point of the political compass, and still feels the wind of popularity in his tail. He too, like a portentous comet, has risen again above the court-horizon; but how long he will continue to ascend, it is not easy to foretel, considering his great eccentricity—' Who are those two satellites that attend his motions?'

motions?' When Barton told him their names, 'To their characters (said Mr. Bramble) I am no stranger. One of them, without a drop of red blood in his veins, has a cold intoxicating vapour in his head; and rancour enough in his heart to inoculate and affect a whole nation. The other is (I hear) intended for a share in the ad——n, and the pensionary vouches for his being duly qualified—The only instance I have ever heard of his sagacity, was his deserting his former patron when he found him declining in power, and in disgrace with the people. Without principle, talent, or intelligence, he is ungracious as a hog, greedy as a vulture, and thievish as a jackdaw; but, it must be owned, he is no hypocrite. He pretends to no virtue, and takes no pains to disguise his character. His ministry will be attended with one advantage, no man will be disappointed by his breach of promise, as no mortal ever trusted to his word. I wonder how lord —— first discovered this happy genius, and for what purpose lord —— has now adopted him: but one would think, that as amber has a power to attract dirt, and straws, and chaff, a minister is endued with the same kind of faculty, to *lick up every knave and blockhead in his way*—' His eulogium was interrupted by the arrival of the old duke of N——; who, squeezing into the circle with a busy face of importance, thrust his head into every countenance, as if he had been in search of somebody, to whom he wanted to impart something of great consequence. My uncle, who had been formerly known to him, bowed as he passed; and the duke, seeing himself saluted so respectfully by a well-dressed person, was not slow in returning the courtesy—He even came up, and, taking him cordially by the hand, 'My dear friend, Mr. A— (said he,) I am rejoiced to see you—How long have you been come from abroad? How did you leave our good friends, the Dutch? The king of Prussia don't think of another war, ah?

—He's

—He's a great king! a great conqueror! a very great conqueror! Your Alexanders and Hannibals were nothing at all to him, sir—Corporals! drummers! dross! mere trash!—Damned trash, eh?—His grace being by this time out of breath, my uncle took the opportunity to tell him he had not been out of England, that his name was Bramble, and that he had the honour to sit in the last parliament but one of the late king, as representative for the borough of Dymkymraig. 'Odso! (cried the duke) I remember you perfectly well, my dear Mr. Bramble—You was always a good and loyal subject—a staunch friend to administration—I made your brother an Irish bishop—' 'Pardon me, my lord, (said the 'squire) I once had a brother, but he was a captain in the army—' 'Ha! (said his grace) he was so—He was indeed! But who was the bishop then? Bishop Blackberry—Sure it was bishop Blackberry—Perhaps some relation of yours—' 'Very likely, my lord, (replied my uncle;) the Blackberry is the fruit of the Bramble—But, I believe, the bishop is not a berry of our bush—' 'No more he is—No more he is—Ha, ha, ha! (exclaimed the duke;) there you gave me a scratch, good Mr. Bramble—Ha, ha, ha!—Well, I shall be glad to see you at Lincoln's-inn-fields—You know the way—Times are altered. Though I have lost the power, I retain the inclination—Your very humble servant, good Mr. Blackberry—' So saying, he shoved to another corner of the room. 'What a fine old gentleman! (cried Mr. Barton:) what spirits! what a memory!—He never forgets an old friend.' 'He does me too much honour (observed our 'squire) to rank me among the number—Whilst I sat in parliament, I never voted with the ministry but three times, when my conscience told me they were in the right: however, if he still keeps levee, I will carry my nephew thither, that he may see, and learn to avoid the scene; for, I think, an English

lish gentleman never appears to such disadvantage as at the levee of a minister—Of his grace I shall say nothing at present, but that for thirty years he was the constant and common butt of ridicule and execration. He was generally laughed at as an ape in politics, whose office and influence served only to render his folly the more notorious ; and the opposition cursed him, as the indefatigable drudge of a first-mover, who was justly styled and stigmatized as the father of corruption : but this ridiculous ape, this venal drudge, no sooner lost the places he was so ill qualified to fill, and unfurled the banners of faction, than he was metamorphosed into a pattern of public virtue ; the very people who reviled him before, now extolled him to the skies, as a wise, experienced statesman, chief pillar of the Protestant succession, and corner stone of English liberty. I should be glad to know how Mr. Barton reconciles these contradictions, without obliging us to resign all title to the privilege of common sense.’ ‘My dear sir, (answered Barton,) I don’t pretend to justify the extravagations of the multitude ; who, I suppose, were as wild in their former censure as in their present praise : but I shall be very glad to attend you on Thursday next to his grace’s levee ; where, I’m afraid, we shall not be crowded with company ; for, you know, there’s a wide difference between his present office of president of the council, and his former post of first lord commissioner of the treasury.’

This communicative friend having announced all the remarkable characters of both sexes that appeared at court, we resolved to adjourn, and retired. At the foot of the stair-case there were a crowd of lacquies and chairmen, and in the midst of them stood Humphry Clinker, exalted upon a stool, with his hat in one hand, and a paper in the other, in the act of holding forth to the people—Before we could enquire into the meaning of this exhibition, he perceived

ceived his master, thrust the paper into his pocket, descended from his elevation, bolted through the crowd, and brought up the carriage to the gate.

My uncle said nothing till we were seated, when, after having looked at me earnestly for some time, he burst out a laughing, and asked if I knew upon what subject Clinker was holding forth to the mob—
‘If (said he) the fellow is turned mountebank, I must turn him out of my service, otherwise he’ll make Merry Andrews of us all—’ I observed, that, in all probability, he had studied medicine under his master, who was a farrier.—

At dinner, the squire asked him, if he had ever practised physic? ‘Yes, an please your honour, (said he,) among brute beasts; but I never meddle with rational creatures.’ ‘I know not whether you rank in that class the audience you was haranguing in the court at St. James’s, but I should be glad to know what kind of powders you were distributing; and whether you had a good sale—’ ‘Sale, sir! (cried Clinker)—I hope I shall never be base enough to sell for gold and silver, what freely comes of God’s grace. I distributed nothing, and like your honour, but a word of advice to my fellows in servitude and sin.’ ‘Advice! concerning what?’ ‘Concerning profane swearing, and please your honour; so horrid and shocking, that it made my hair stand on end.’ ‘Nay, if thou canst cure them of that disease, I shall think thee a wonderful doctor indeed—’ ‘Why not cure them, my good master? the hearts of those poor people are not so stubborn as your honour seems to think—Make them first sensible that you have nothing in view but their good, then they will listen with patience, and easily be convinced of the sin and folly of a practice that affords neither profit nor pleasure—’ At this remark, our uncle changed colour, and looked round the company, conscious that his *own withers were not altogether unwrung*. ‘But, Clinker, (said he,) if you

you should have eloquence enough to persuade the vulgar to resign those tropes and figures of rhetoric, there will be little or nothing left to distinguish their conversation from that of their betters.'

'But then your honour knows, their conversation will be void offence; and, at the day of judgment, there will no distinction of persons.'

Humphry going down stairs to fetch up a bottle of wine, my uncle congratulated his sister upon having such a reformer in the family; when Mrs. Tabitha declared, he was a sober civilised fellow; very respectful, and very industrious: and, she believed, a good Christian into the bargain. One would think Clinker must really have some very extraordinary talent, to ingratiate himself in this manner with a virago of her character, so fortified against him with prejudice and resentment; but the truth is, since the adventure of Salt-hill, Mrs. Tabby seems to be entirely changed. She has left off scolding the servants, an exercise which was grown habitual, and even seemed necessary to her constitution; and is become so indifferent to Chowder, as to part with him in a present to lady Griskin, who proposes to bring the breed of him into fashion. Her ladyship is the widow of Sir Timothy Griskin, a distant relation of our family. She enjoys a jointure of five hundred pounds a year, and makes shift to spend three times that sum. Her character before marriage was a little equivocal; but at present she lives in the *bon ton*, keeps card-tables, gives private suppers to select friends, and is visited by persons of the first fashion—She has been remarkably civil to us all, and cultivates my uncle with the most particular regard; but the more she strokes him, the more his bristles seem to rise—To her compliments he makes very laconic and dry returns—Tother day she sent us a potile of fine strawberries, which he did not receive without signs of disgust, muttering from the *Æneid*, *Timeo Danais et*

Dona

Dona ferentes. She has twice called for Liddy, of a forenoon, to take an airing in the coach ; but Mrs. Tabby was always so alert (I suppose by his direction) that she never could have the niece without her aunt's company—I have endeavoured to sound square-toes on this subject ; but he carefully avoids all explanation.

I have now, dear Phillips, filled a whole sheet ; and if you have read it to an end, I dare say you are as tired as

Your humble servant,

London, June 2.

J. Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

YES, Doctor, I have seen the British Museum ; which is a noble collection, and even stupendous, if we consider it was made by a private man, a physician, who was obliged to make his own fortune at the same time ; but, great as the collection is, it would appear more striking if it was arranged in one spacious saloon, instead of being divided into different apartments, which it does not entirely fill—I could wish the series of medals was connected, and the whole of the animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms completed, by adding to each, at the public expence, those articles that are wanting. It would likewise be a great improvement, with respect to the library, if the deficiencies were made up, by purchasing all the books of character that are not to be found already in the collection—They might be classed in centuries, according to the dates of their publication, and catalogues printed of them and the manuscripts for the information of those that want to consult or compile from such authorities. I could also wish, for the honour of the nation, that there was a complete apparatus for a course of mathematics, mechanics, and experimental philosophy ; and a good salary settled upon

an able professor, who should give regular lectures on these subjects.

But this is all idle speculation, which will never be reduced to practice—Considering the temper of the times, it is a wonder to see any institution whatsoever established for the benefit of the public. The spirit of party is risen to a kind of phrenzy, unknown to former ages, or rather degenerated to a total extinction of honesty and candour—You know I have observed, for some time, that the public papers are become the infamous vehicles of the most cruel and perfidious defamation: every rancorous knave, and every desperate incendiary, that can afford to spend half a crown or three shillings, may skulk behind the press of a news-monger, and have a stab at the first character in the kingdom, without running the least hazard of detection or punishment.

I have made acquaintance with a Mr. Barton, whom Jerry knew at Oxford; a good sort of a man, though most ridiculously warped in his political principles; but his partiality is the less offensive, as it never appears in the style of scurrility and abuse. He is a member of parliament, and a retainer to the court; and his whole conversation turns upon the virtues and perfections of the ministers, who are his patrons. Tother day, when he was bedaubing one of those worthies with the most fulsome praise, I told him I had seen the same nobleman characterised very differently in one of the daily papers! Indeed, so stigmatized, that if one half of what was said of him was true, he must be not only unfit to rule, but even unfit to live: that those impeachments had been repeated again and again, with the addition of fresh matter; and that as he had taken no steps towards his own vindication, I began to think there was some foundation for the charge. ‘And pray, sir, (said Mr. Barton,) what steps would you have him take?—

Suppose

Suppose he should prosecute the publisher, who screens the anonymous accuser, and bring him to the pillory for a libel? this is so far from being counted a punishment, *in terrorem*, that it will probably make his fortune. The multitude immediately take him into their protection, as a martyr to the cause of defamation, which they have always espoused—They pay his fine, they contribute to the increase of his stock, his shop is crowded with customers, and the sale of his paper rises in proportion to the scandal it contains. All this time the prosecutor is inveighed against as a tyrant and oppressor, for having chosen to proceed by the way of information, which is deemed a grievance; but if he lays an action for damages, he must prove the damage; and I leave to you to judge, whether a gentleman's character may not be brought into contempt, and all his views in life blasted by calumny, without his being able to specify the particulars of the damage he has sustained.

‘ This spirit of defamation is a kind of heresy, that thrives under persecution. *The liberty of the press* is a term of great efficacy; and, like that of *the Protestant religion*, has often served the purposes of sedition—A minister, therefore, must arm himself with patience, and bear those attacks without repining—Whatever mischief they may do in other respects, they certainly contribute, in one particular, to the advantage of government; for those defamatory articles have multiplied papers in such a manner, and augmented their sale to such a degree, that the duty upon stamps and advertisements has made a very considerable addition to the revenue.’ Certain it is, a gentleman's honour is a very delicate subject to be handled by a jury, composed of men who cannot be supposed remarkable either for sentiment or impartiality—In such a case, indeed, the defendant is tried, not only by his peers, but also by his party; and I really think, that of all patriots,

he is the most resolute who exposes himself to such detraction for the sake of his country—If, from the ignorance or partiality of juries, a gentleman can have no redress from law, for being defamed in a pamphlet or news-paper, I know but one other method of proceeding against the publisher, which is attended with some risque, but has been practised successfully more than once, in my remembrance—A regiment of horse was represented in one of the news-papers as having misbehaved at Dettingen; a captain of that regiment broke the publisher's bones, telling him, at the same time, if he went to law, he should certainly have the like salutation from every officer of the corps. Governor — took the same satisfaction on the ribs of an author, who traduced him by name in a periodical paper—I know a low fellow of the same class, who being turned out of Venice for his impudence and scurrility, retired to Lugano, a town of the Grisons, (a free people, God wot,) where he found a printing-press, from whence he squirted his filth at some respectable characters in the republic which he had been obliged to abandon. Some of these, finding him out of the reach of legal chastisement, employed certain useful instruments, such as may be found in all countries, to give him the bastinado; which, being repeated more than once, effectually stopt the current of his abuse.

As for the liberty of the press, like every other privilege, it must be restrained within certain bounds; for if it is carried to a breach of law, religion, and charity, it becomes one of the greatest evils that ever annoyed the community. If the lowest ruffian may stab your good-name with impunity in England, will you be so uncandid as to exclaim against Italy for the practice of common assassination? To what purpose is our property secured, if our moral character is left defenceless? People thus baited, grow desperate; and the despair of being

ing able to preserve one's character, untainted by such vermin, produces a total neglect of fame; so that one of the chief incitements to the practice of virtue is effectually destroyed.

Mr. Barton's last consideration, respecting the stamp duty, is equally wise and laudable with another maxim which has long been adopted by our financiers, namely, to connive at drunkenness, riot, and dissipation, because they enhance the receipt of the excise; not reflecting, that, in providing this temporary convenience, they are destroying the morals, health, and industry of the people—Notwithstanding my contempt for those who flatter a minister, I think there is something still more despicable in flattering a mob. When I see a man of birth, education, and fortune, put himself on a level with the dregs of the people, mingle with low mechanics, feed with them at the same board, and drink with them in the same cup, flatter their prejudices, harangue in praise of their virtues, expose themselves to the belchings of their beer, the fumes of their tobacco, the grossness of their familiarity, and the impertinence of their conversation, I cannot help despising him, as a man guilty of the vilest prostitution, in order to effect a purpose equally selfish and illiberal.

I should renounce politics the more willingly, if I could find other topics of conversation discussed with more modesty and candour; but the dæmon of party seems to have usurped every department of life. Even the world of literature and taste is divided into the most virulent factions, which revile, decry, and traduce the works of one another. Yesterday, I went to return an afternoon's visit to a gentleman of my acquaintance, at whose house I found one of the authors of the present age, who has written with some success—As I had read one or two of his performances, which gave me pleasure, I was glad of this opportunity to know his person;

but his discourse and deportment destroyed all the impressions which his writings had made in his favour. He took upon him to decide dogmatically upon every subject, without deigning to shew the least cause for his differing from the general opinions of mankind, as if it had been our duty to acquiesce in the *ipse dixit* of this new Pythagoras. He rejudged the characters of all the principal authors who had died within a century of the present time ; and, in this revision, paid no sort of regard to the reputation they had acquired—Milton was harsh and prosaic ; Dryden, languid and verbose ; Butler and Swift, without humour ; Congreve, without wit ; and Pope destitute of any sort of poetical merit—As for his contemporaries, he could not bear to hear one of them mentioned with any degree of applause ; they were all dunces, pedants, plagiaries, quacks, and impostors ; and you could not name a single performance, but what was tame, stupid, and insipid. It must be owned that this writer had nothing to charge his conscience with on the side of flattery ; for, I understand, he was never known to praise one line that was written even by those with whom he lived on terms of good fellowship. This arrogance and presumption, in depreciating authors, for whose reputation the community may be interested, is such an insult upon the understanding, as I could not bear without wincing.

I desired to know his reasons for decrying some works, which had afforded me uncommon pleasure ; and, as demonstration did not seem to be his talent, I dissented from his opinion with great freedom. Having been spoiled by the deference and humility of his hearers, he did not bear contradiction with much temper ; and the dispute might have grown warm, had it not been interrupted by the entrance of a rival bard, at whose appearance he always quits the place—They are of different cabals, and have been at open war these twenty years
—If

—If the other was dogmatical, this genius was declamatory ; he did not discourse, but harangue ; and his orations were equally tedious and turgid. He too pronounces *ex cathedra* upon the characters of his contemporaries ; and though he scruples not to deal out praise, even lavishly, to the lowest reptile in Grub-street, who will either flatter him in private, or mount the public rostrum as his panegyrist, he damns all the other writers of the age, with the utmost insolence and rancour—One is a blunderbuss, as being a native of Ireland ; another a half-starved louse of literature, from the banks of the Tweed ; a third, an ass, because he enjoys a pension from the government ; a fourth, the very angel of dulness, because he succeeded in a species of writing in which this Aristarchus had failed ; a fifth, who presumed to make strictures upon one of his performances, he holds as a bug in criticism, whose stench is more offensive than his sting—In short, except himself and his myrmidons, there is not a man of genius or learning in the three kingdoms. As for the success of those who have written without the pale of this confederacy, he imputes it entirely to want of taste in the public ; not considering, that to the approbation of that very tasteless public, he himself owes all the consequence he has in life.

Those originals are not fit for conversation. If they would maintain the advantage they have gained by their writing, they should never appear but upon paper—For my part, I am shocked to find a man have sublime ideas in his head, and nothing but illiberal sentiments in his heart—The human soul will be generally found most defective in the article of candour—I am inclined to think, no mind was ever wholly exempt from envy ; which, perhaps, may have been implanted as an instinct essential to our nature. I am afraid we sometimes palliate this vice, under the specious name of emulation,

lation. I have known a person remarkably generous, humane, moderate, and apparently self-denying, who could not hear even a friend commended, without betraying marks of uneasiness; as if that commendation had implied an odious comparison to his prejudice, and every wreath of praise added to the other's character was a garland plucked from his own temples. This is a malignant species of jealousy, of which I stand acquitted in my own conscience—Whether it is a vice or an infirmity, I leave you to inquire.

There is another point which I would much rather see determined; whether the world was always as contemptible as it appears to me at present?—If the morals of mankind have not contracted an extraordinary degree of depravity within these thirty years, then must I be infected with the common vice of old men, *difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti*; or, which is more probable, the impetuous pursuits and avocations of youth have formerly hindered me from observing those rotten parts of human nature, which now appear so offensively to my observation.

We have been at Court, and 'Change, and every where; and every where we find food for spleen, and subject for ridicule—My new servant, Humphry Clinker, turns out a great original; and Tabby is a changed creature—She has parted with Chowder; and does nothing but smile, like Malvolio in the play—I'll be hanged if she is not acting a part which is not natural to her disposition, for some purpose which I have not yet discovered.

With respect to the characters of mankind, my curiosity is quite satisfied: I have done with the science of men, and must now endeavour to amuse myself with the novelty of things. I am, at present, by a violent effort of the mind, forced from my natural bias; but this power ceasing to act, I shall return to my solitude with redoubled velocity.

Every

Every thing I see, and hear, and feel, in this great reservoir of folly, knavery, and sophistification, contributes to enhance the value of a country life, in the sentiments of yours always,

London, June 2.

Mat. Bramble.

To Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton Hall.

Dear Mary Jones,

LADY Grislin's botler, Mr. Crumb, having got 'squire Barton to frank me a kiver, I would not neglect to let you know how it is with me, and the rest of the family.

I could not rite by John Thomas, for because he went away in a huff, at a minute's warning. He and Chowder could not agree, and so they sitt upon the road, and Chowder bit his thumb, and he swore he would do him a mischief, and he spoke saucy to mistress, whereby the 'squire turned him off in gudgeon; and by God's providence we picked up another footman, called Umphry Klinker; a good sole as ever broke bread; which shews that a scalded cat may prove a good mouser, and a hound be staunch, thof he has got narro hare on his buttocks; but the proudest nose may be bro't to the grine-stone by sickness and misfortunes.

O Molly! what shall I say of London? All the towns that ever I beheld in my born days are no more than Welch barrows and crumlecks to this wonderful fitty! Even Bath itself is but a fillitch, in the naam of God—one would think there's no end of the streets, but the land's end. Then there's such a power of people, going hurry scurry! Such a racket of coxes! Such a noise, and hali-balloo! So many strange sites to be seen! O gracious! my poor Welch brain has been spinning like a top ever since I came hither! And I have seen the park, and the paleas of St. Gimfes, and the king's and the queen's magisterial purfings, and the sweet young

young princes, and the hillyfents, and pye-bald afs, and all the reft of the royal family.

Last week I went with miftrefs to the tower, to fee the crowns and wild beaftis; and there was a monfracious lion, with teeth half a quarter long! and a gentleman bid me not go near him, if I wafn't a maid, being as how he would roar, and tear, and play the dickins—Now I had no mind to go near him; for I cannot abide fuch dangerous honeymills, not I—but miftrefs would go; and the beaft kept fuch a roaring and bouncing, that I tho't he would broke his cage and devoured us all; and the gentleman tittered forfooth; but I'll go to death upon it, I will, that my lady is as good a firchin as the child unborn; and, therefore, either the gentleman told a fib, or the lion ought to be fet in the stocks for bearing falfe witnefs again his neighbour; for the commandment fayeth, *Thou fhalt not bear falfe witnefs againft thy neighbour.*

I was afterwards of a party at Sadler's well, where I faw fuch tumbling and dancing upon ropes and wires, that I was frightened, and ready to go into a fit—I tho't it was all enchantment; and believing myfelf bewitched, began for to cry—You knows as how the witches in Wales fly upon broomsticks; but here was flying without any broomstick, or thing in the varfal world, and firing of pistols in the air, and blowing of trumpets, and and fwinging, and rolling of wheel-barrows upon a wire, (God blefs us!) no thicker than a fewing-thread; that, to be fure, they muft deal with the devil!—A fine gentleman with a pig's tail, and a golden ford by his fide, came to comfit me, and offered to treat me with a pint of wind; but I would not ftay; and fo, in going through the dark paffage, he began to fhew his cloven futt, and went for to be rude: my fellow-farvant Umphry Klinker, bid him be fivil, and he gave the young man a deufe in the chops; but, I fackins, Mr. Klinker wa'n't

wa'n't long in his debt—with a good oaken sapling he dusted his doublet, for all his golden cheese toaster; and, slipping me under his arm, carried me home, I nose not how, being I was in such a frustration—But thank God! I'm now vaned from all such vanities; for what are all those rarities and vagaries to the glories that shall be revealed hereafter? O Molly! let not your poor heart be puffed up with vanity.

I had almost forgot to tell you that I have had my hair cut and pippered, and singed, and bolstered, and buckled, in the newest fashion by a French freezer—*Parley vow Francey—Vee madman-fell*—I now carries my head higher than arro private gentlewoman of Vales. Last night coming home from the meeting, I was taken by lamp-light for an imminent poulterer's daughter, a great beauty—But as I was saying, this is all vanity and vexation of spirit—The pleasures of London are no better than four whey and stale cyder, when compared to the joys of the new Jerusalem.

Dear Mary Jones! an please God, when I return, I'll bring you a new cap, with a turkey-shell coom, and a pyehouse sermon, that was preached in the Tabernacle; and I pray of all love, you will mind your vriting and your spilling; for, craving your pardon, Molly, it made me suet to dissypher your last scrabble, which was delivered by the hind at Bath—O, voman! voman! if thou hadst but the least consumption of what pleasure we scullers have, when we can cunster the crabbidist buck off hand, and spell the ethnitch vords without lucking at the primmer. As for Mr. Klinker, he is qualified to be clerk to a parish—But I'll say no more—Remember me to Saul—poor sole! it goes to my hart to think she don't know her letters—But all in God's good time—It shall go hard, but I will bring her the A B C in gingerbread; and that you nose will be learning to her taste.

Mistress

Mistress says, we are going a long gurney to the North ; but go where we will, I shall ever be,

Dear Mary Jones,

London, June 3.

Your's with true infection,

Win. Jenkins.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus College, Oxon.

Dear Wat,

I MENTIONED in my last, my uncle's design of going to the duke of N———'s levee ; which design has been executed accordingly. His grace has been so long accustomed to this kind of homage, that though the place he now fills does not imply the tenth part of the influence which he exerted in his former office, he has given his friends to understand, that they cannot oblige him in any thing more than in contributing to support the shadow of that power which he no longer retains in substance ; and therefore he has still public days, on which they appear at his levee.

My uncle and I went thither with Mr. Barton, who being one of the duke's adherents, undertook to be our introducer—The room was pretty well filled with people, in a great variety of dress ; but there was no more than one gown and cassock ; though I was told his grace had, while he was minister, preferred almost every individual that now filled the bench of bishops in the house of lords ; but, in all probability, the gratitude of the clergy is like their charity, which shuns the light—Mr. Barton was immediately accosted by a person well stricken in years, tall, and raw-boned, with a hook-nose, and an arch leer, that indicated, at least, as much cunning as sagacity. Our conductor saluted him by the name of captain C——, and afterwards informed us he was a man of shrewd parts, whom the government occasionally employed in secret services—But I have had the history of him more at large, from another quarter—He had
been,

been, many years ago, concerned in fraudulent practices, as a merchant in France; and being convicted of some of them, was sent to the galleys, from whence he was delivered by the interest of the late Duke of Ormond, to whom he had recommended himself in a letter as his name-fake and relation—He was, in the sequel, employed by our ministry as a spy; and, in the war of 1740, traversed all Spain, as well as France, in the disguise of a capuchin, at the extreme hazard of his life, in as much as the court of Madrid had actually got scent of him, and given orders to apprehend him at St. Sebastian's, from whence he had fortunately retired but a few hours before the order arrived. This and other hair-breadth 'scapes he pleaded so effectually as a merit with the English ministry, that they allowed him a comfortable pension, which he now enjoys in his old age—He has still access to all the ministers, and is said to be consulted by them on many subjects, as a man of uncommon understanding and great experience—He is, in fact, a fellow of some parts and invincible assurance; and, in his discourse, he assumes such an air of self-sufficiency, as may very well impose upon some of the shallow politicians who now labour at the helm of administration. But, if he is not belied, this is not the only imposture of which he is guilty—They say, he is at bottom not only a Roman Catholic, but really a priest; and while he pretends to disclose to our state-pilots all the springs that move the cabinet of Versailles, he is actually picking up intelligence for the service of the French minister—Be that as it may, Captain C—— entered into conversation with us in the most familiar manner, and treated the duke's character without any ceremony—"This wise-acre (said he) is still a-bed; and, I think, the best thing he can do, is to sleep on till Christmas; for when he gets up, he does nothing but expose his own folly.—Since Granville was turned out,

there has been no minister in this nation worth the meal that whitened his perriwig—They are so ignorant, they scarce know a crab from a cauliflower; and then they are such dunces, that there's no making them comprehend the plainest proposition—In the beginning of the war, this poor half-witted creature told me, in a great fright, that thirty thousand French had marched from Acadia to Cape Breton—"Where did they find transports?" (said I.) "Transports! (cried he;) I tell you, they marched by land—" "By land to the island of Cape Breton?" "What! is Cape Breton an island?" "Certainly." "Ha! are you sure of that!" When I pointed it out in the map, he examined it earnestly with his spectacles; then taking me in his arms, "My dear C——! (cried he) you always bring us good news—Egad I'll go directly, and tell the king that Cape Breton is an island."

He seemed disposed to entertain us with more anecdotes of this nature, at the expence of his grace, when he was interrupted by the arrival of the Algerine ambassador; a venerable Turk, with a long white beard, attended by his dragoman, or interpreter, and another officer of his household who had got no stockings to his legs—Captain C—— immediately spoke with an air of authority to a servant in waiting, bidding him go and tell the duke to rise, as there was a great deal of company come, and, among others, the ambassador from Algiers—Then turning to us, "This poor Turk (said he) notwithstanding his grey beard, is a greenhorn—He has been several years resident in London, and still is ignorant of our political revolutions. This visit is intended for the prime minister of England; but you'll see how this wise duke will receive it as a mark of attachment to his own person—" Certain it is, the duke seemed eager to acknowledge the compliment—A door opening, he suddenly bolted out, with a shaving cloth under his

his chin, his face frothed up to the eyes with soap lather; and, running up to the ambassador, grinned hideous in his face—"My dear Mahomet! (said he) God love your long beard, I hope the dey will make you a horse-tail at the next promotion—Ha, ha, ha!—Have but a moment's patience, and I'll send to you in a twinkling—" So saying, he retreated into his den, leaving the Turk in some confusion. After a short pause, however, he said something to his interpreter, the meaning of which I had great curiosity to know, as he turned up his eyes while he spoke, expressing astonishment, mixed with devotion—"We were gratified by means of the communicative captain C——, who conversed with the dragoman, as an old acquaintance. Ibrahim, the ambassador, who had mistaken his grace for the minister's fool, was no sooner undeceived by the interpreter, than he exclaimed to this effect—"Holy prophet! I don't wonder that this nation prospers, seeing it is governed by the counsel of ideots; a series of men, whom all good mussulmen revere as the organs of immediate inspiration!" Ibrahim was favoured with a particular audience of short duration; after which the duke conducted him to the door, and then returned to diffuse his gracious looks among the crowd of his worshippers.

As Mr. Barton advanced to present me to his grace, it was my fortune to attract his notice before I was announced—He forthwith met me more than half way, and seizing me by the hand, 'My dear sir Francis (cried he) this is so kind—I vow to Gad! I am so obliged—Such attention to a poor broken minister—Well—Pray when does your excellency set sail?—For God's sake have a care of your health, and eat stewed prunes in the passage—Next to your own precious health, pray, my dear excellency, take care of the Five Nations—Our good friends the Five Nations—The Toryrories, the Maccollmacks, the Out-o'the-ways, the Crickets, and the

Kickshaws—Let 'em have plenty of blankets, and flinkabus, and Wampum; and your excellency won't fail to scour the kettle, and boil the chain, and bury the tree, and plant the hatchet—Ha, ha, ha!" When he had uttered this rhapsody, with his usual precipitation, Mr. Barton gave him to understand, that I was neither sir Francis, nor St. Francis, but simply Mr. Melford, nephew to Mr. Bramble; who, stepping forward, made his bow at the same time. 'Odso! no more it is sir Francis—(said this wise statesman)—Mr. Melford, I'm glad to see you—I sent you an engineer to fortify your dock—Mr. Bramble—your servant, Mr. Bramble—How d'ye, good Mr. Bramble? Your nephew is a pretty young fellow—Faith and troth, a very pretty fellow!—His father is my old friend—How does he hold it? Still troubled with that damned disorder, ha?' 'No, my lord, (replied my uncle,) all his troubles are over—He has been dead these fifteen years.' 'Dead! how—Yes, faith! now I remember: he is dead, sure enough—Well, and how—does the young gentleman stand for Haverford-West? or—a—what d'ye—My dear Mr. Milfordhaven, I'll do you all the service in my power—I hope I have some credit left!—' My uncle then gave him to understand, that I was still a minor; and that we had no intention to trouble him at present for any favour whatsoever—'I came hither with my nephew (added he) to pay our respects to your grace; and may venture to say, that his views and mine are at least as disinterested as those of any individual in this assembly.' 'My dear Mr. Brambleberry! you do me infinite honour—I shall always rejoice to see you and your hopeful nephew, Mr. Milfordhaven—My credit, such as it is, you may command—I wish we had more friends of your kidney—'

Then turning to Captain C—— 'Ha, C——! (said he) what news, C——? How does the world wag? ha!'—'The world wags much after the old fashion,

fashion, my lord, (answered the captain :) the politicians of London and Westminster have begun again to wag their tongues against your grace ; and your short-lived popularity wags like a feather, which the next puff of anti-ministerial calumny will blow away—' A pack of rascals (cried the duke) —Tories, Jacobites, rebels ; one half of them would wag their heels at Tyburn, if they had their deserts—' So saying, he wheeled about ; and, going round the levee, spoke to every individual, with the most courteous familiarity ; but he scarce ever opened his mouth without making some blunder, in relation to the person or business of the party with whom he conversed ; so that he really looked like a comedian, hired to burlesque the character of a minister—At length, a person of a very prepossessing appearance coming in, his grace ran up, and, hugging him in his arms, with the appellation of ' My dear Ch——s ! ' led him forthwith into the inner apartment, or *Sanctum Sanctorum* of his political temple. ' That (said Captain C——) is my friend C—T—, almost the only man of parts who has any concern in the present administration—Indeed, he would have no concern at all in the matter, if the ministry did not find it absolutely necessary to make use of his talents upon some particular occasions—As for the common business of the nation, it is carried on in a constant routine by the clerks of the different offices, otherwise the wheels of government would be wholly stopt amidst the abrupt succession of ministers, every one more ignorant than his predecessor—I am thinking what a fine hovel we should be in, if all the clerks of the treasury, of the secretaries, the war-office, and the admiralty, should take it in their heads to throw up their places in imitation of the great pensioner—But, to return to C—T— ; he certainly knows more than all the ministry and all the opposition, if their heads were laid together, and talks like an angel on a vast variety of

subjects—He would really be a great man, if he had any consistency or stability of character—Then, it must be owned, he wants courage, otherwise he would never allow himself to be cowed by the great political bully, for whose understanding he has justly a very great contempt. I have seen him as much afraid of that overbearing Hector, as ever school-boy was of his pedagogue; and yet this Hector, I shrewdly suspect, is no more than a craven at bottom—Besides this defect, C— has another, which he is at too little pains to hide—There's no faith to be given to his assertions, and no trust to be put in his promises—However, to give the devil his due, he is very good-natured; and even friendly when close urged in the way of sollicitation—As for principle, that's out of the question—In a word, he's a wit and an orator, extremely entertaining, and he shines very often at the expence even of those ministers to whom he is retainer—This is a mark of great imprudence, by which he has made them all his enemies, whatever face they may put upon the matter; and sooner or later he'll have cause to wish he had been able to keep his own counsel—I have several times cautioned him on this subject; but 'tis all preaching to the desert—His vanity runs away with his discretion—" I could not help thinking the captain himself might have been the better for some hints of the same nature—His panegyric, excluding principle and veracity, puts me in mind of a contest I once over-heard in the way of altercation, betwixt two apple-women in Spring-garden—One of those viragos having hinted something to the prejudice of the other's moral character, her antagonist, setting her hands in her sides, replied—" Speak out, hussy—I scorn your malice—I own I'm both a whore and a thief; and what more have you to say?—Damn you, what more have you to say? Bating that, which all the world knows, I challenge you to say black is the white of my eye—"

eye—" We did not wait for Mr. T's coming forth ; but after Captain C—— had characterised all the originals in waiting, we adjourned to a coffee-house, where we had buttered muffins and tea to breakfast, the said captain still favouring us with his company—Nay, my uncle was so diverted with his anecdotes, that he asked him to dinner, and treated him with a fine turbot, to which he did ample justice—That same evening I spent at the tavern with some friends, one of whom let me into C——'s character, which Mr. Bramble no sooner understood, than he expressed some concern for the connection he had made, and resolved to disengage himself from it without ceremony.

We are become members of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, and have assisted at some of their deliberations, which were conducted with equal spirit and sagacity—My uncle is extremely fond of the institution, which will certainly be productive of great advantages to the public, if, from its democratical form, it does not degenerate into cabal and corruption—You are already acquainted with his aversion to the influence of the multitude, which, he affirms, is incompatible with excellence, and subversive of order—Indeed, his detestation of the mob has been heightened by fear, ever since he fainted in the room at Bath ; and this apprehension has prevented him from going to the Little Theatre in the Hay-market, and other places of entertainment, to which, however, I have had the honour to attend the ladies.

It grates old Square-toes to reflect, that it is not in his power to enjoy even the most elegant diversions of the capital, without the participation of the vulgar ; for they now thrust themselves into all assemblies, from a ridotto at St. James's to a hop at Rotherhithe.

I have lately seen an old acquaintance, Dick Ivy, who we imagined had died of dram-drinking ; but
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he has lately emerged from the Fleet, by means of a pamphlet which he wrote and published against the government with some success. The sale of this performance enabled him to appear in clean linen, and he is now going about soliciting subscriptions for his poems; but his breeches are not yet in the most decent order.

Dick certainly deserves some countenance for his intrepidity and perseverance—It is not in the power of disappointment, nor even of damnation, to drive him to despair—After some unsuccessful essays, in the way of poetry, he commenced brandy-merchant, and I believe his whole stock ran out through his own bowels; then he consoled with a milk-woman, who kept a cellar in Petty-France, but he could not make his quarters good; he was dislodged, and driven up stairs into the kennel, by a corporal in the second regiment of foot guards—He was afterwards the laureat of Blackfriars, from whence there was a natural transition to the Fleet—As he had formerly miscarried in panegyric, he now turned his thoughts to satire, and really seems to have some talent for abuse. If he can hold out till the meeting of the parliament, and be prepared for another change, in all probability Dick will mount the pillory, or obtain a pension, in either of which events his fortune will be made—Mean while he has acquired some degree of consideration with the respectable writers of the age; and as I have subscribed for his works, he did me the favour to other night to introduce me to a society of those genuises; but I found them exceedingly formal and reserved—they seemed afraid and jealous of one another, and sat in a state of mutual repulsion, like so many particles of vapour, each surrounded by its own electrified atmosphere. Dick, who has more vivacity than judgment, tried more than once to enliven the conversation; sometimes making an effort at wit, sometimes letting off a pun, and sometimes

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discharging a conundrum; nay, at length he started a dispute upon the hackneyed comparison betwixt blank verse and rhyme, and the professors opened with great clamour: but, instead of keeping to the subject, they launched out into tedious dissertations on the poetry of the ancients; and one of them, who had been a schoolmaster, displayed his whole knowledge of prosody, gleaned from Despauter and Ruddiman. At last, I ventured to say, I did not see how the subject in question could be at all elucidated by the practice of the ancients, who certainly had neither blank verse nor rhyme in their poems, which were measured by feet, whereas ours are reckoned by the number of syllables—This remark seemed to give umbrage to the pedant, who forthwith involved himself in a cloud of Greek and Latin quotations, which nobody attempted to dispel—A confused hum of insipid observations and comments ensued; and, upon the whole, I never passed a duller evening in my life—Yet, without all doubt, some of them were men of learning, wit, and ingenuity. As they are afraid of making free with one another, they should bring each his butt, or whetstone, along with him, for the entertainment of the company—My uncle says, he never desires to meet with more than one wit at a time—One wit, like a knuckle of ham in soup, gives a zest and flavour to the dish; but more than one serves only to spoil the pottage—And now I'm afraid I have given you an unconscionable mess, without any flavour at all; for which, I suppose, you will bestow your benedictions upon, your friend and servant,

London, June 5.

J. Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Lewis,

YOUR fable of the monkey and the pig, is what the Italians call *ben trovata*; but I shall not repeat it

it to my apothecary, who is a proud Scotchman, very thin skinned, and, for aught I know, may have his degree in his pocket. A right Scotchman has always two strings to his bow, and is *in utrumque paratus*. Certain it is, I have not escaped a scouring; but, I believe, by means of that scouring, I have escaped something worse, perhaps a tedious fit of the gout or rheumatism; for my appetite began to flag, and I had certain croakings in the bowels, which boded me no good. Nay, I am not yet quite free of these remembrances, which warn me to be gone from this centre of infection.

What temptation can a man of my turn and temperament have to live in a place where every corner teems with fresh objects of detestation and disgust? What kind of taste and organs must those people have, who really prefer the adulterate enjoyments of the town to the genuine pleasures of a country retreat? Most people, I know, are originally seduced by vanity, ambition, and childish curiosity, which cannot be gratified, but in the *busy haunts of men*: but, in the course of this gratification, their very organs of sense are perverted, and they become habitually lost to every relish of what is genuine and excellent in its own nature.

Shall I state the difference between my town grievances and my country comforts? At Brambleton Hall, I have elbow-room within doors, and breathe a clear, elastic, salutary air. I enjoy refreshing sleep, which is never disturbed by horrid noise, nor interrupted, but in a morning by the sweet twitter of the martlet at my window. I drink the virgin lymph, pure and crystalline as it gushes from the rock, or the sparkling beverage home-brewed from malt of my own making; or I indulge with cyder, which my own orchard affords; or with claret of the best growth, imported for my own use, by a correspondent on whose integrity I can depend: my bread is sweet and nourishing,
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made from my own wheat, ground in my own mill, and baked in my own oven ; my table is, in a great measure, furnished from my own ground ; my five year old mutton, fed on the fragrant herbage of the mountains, that might vie with venison in juice and flavour ; my delicious veal, fattened with nothing but the mother's milk, that fills the dish with gravy ; my poultry from the barn door, that never knew confinement, but when they were at roost ; my rabbits panting from the warren ; my game fresh from the moors ; my trout and salmon struggling from the stream ; oysters from their native banks ; and herrings, with other sea-fish, I can eat in four hours after they are taken. My fallads, roots, and pot-herbs, my own garden yields in plenty and perfection ; the produce of the natural soil, prepared by moderate cultivation. The same soil affords all the different fruits which England may call her own, so that my dessert is every day fresh-gathered from the tree ; my dairy flows with nectarious tides of milk and cream, from whence we derive abundance of excellent butter, curds, and cheese ; and the refuse fattens my pigs, that are destined for hams and bacon. I go to bed betimes, and rise with the sun. I make shift to pass the hours without weariness or regret ; and am not destitute of amusements within doors, when the weather will not permit me to go abroad. I read, and chat, and play at billiards, cards, or back-gammon. Without doors, I superintend my farm, and execute plans of improvement, the effects of which I enjoy with unspeakable delight. Nor do I take less pleasure in seeing my tenants thrive under my auspices, and the poor live comfortably by the employment which I provide. You know I have one or two sensible friends, to whom I can open all my heart ; a blessing which, perhaps, I might have sought in vain among the crowded scenes of life : there are a few others of more humble parts, whom

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I esteem for their integrity ; and their conversation I find inoffensive, though not very entertaining. Finally, I live in the midst of honest men and trusty dependents, who, I flatter myself, have a disinterested attachment to my person. You yourself, my dear doctor, can vouch for the truth of these assertions.

Now mark the contrast at London. I am pent up in frowzy lodgings, where there is not room enough to swing a cat ; and I breathe the steams of endless putrefaction ; and these would, undoubtedly, produce a pestilence, if they were not qualified by the gross acid of sea-coal, which is itself a pernicious nuisance to lungs of any delicacy of texture : but even this boasted corrector cannot prevent those languid, fallow looks, that distinguish the inhabitants of London from those ruddy swains that lead a country life. I go to bed after midnight, jaded and restless from the dissipations of the day. I start every hour from my sleep, at the horrid noise of the watchmen bawling the hour through every street, and thundering at every door : a set of useless fellows, who serve no other purpose but that of disturbing the repose of the inhabitants ; and by five o'clock I start out of bed, in consequence of the still more dreadful alarm made by the country carts, and noisy rusticks bellowing—Green peas! under my window. If I would drink water, I must quaff the maukish contents of an open aqueduct, exposed to all manner of defilement ; or swallow that which comes from the River Thames, impregnated with all the filth of London and Westminster. Human excrement is the least offensive part of the concrete, which is composed of all the drugs, minerals, and poisons, used in mechanics and manufacture, enriched with the putrefying carcases of beast and men ; and mixed with the scourings of all the wash-tubs, kennels, and common sewers, within the bills of mortality. This

This is the agreeable potation, extolled by the Londoners as the finest water in the universe. As to the intoxicating potion sold for wine, it is a vile, unpalatable, and pernicious sophistication, balderdash with cyder, corn-spirit, and the juice of sloes. In an action at law, laid against a carman for having staved a cask of port, it appeared from the evidence of the cooper, that there were not above five gallons of real wine in the whole pipe, which held above a hundred; and even that had been brewed and adulterated by the merchant at Oporto. The bread I eat in London is a deleterious paste, mixed up with chalk, alum, and bone-ashes; insipid to the taste, and destructive to the constitution. The good people are not ignorant of this adulteration; but they prefer it to wholesome bread, because it is whiter than the meal of corn. Thus they sacrifice their taste and their health, and the lives of their tender infants, to a most absurd gratification of a misjudging eye; and the miller, or the baker, is obliged to poison them and their families, in order to live by his profession. The same monstrous depravity appears in their veal, which is bleached by repeated bleedings, and other villainous arts, till there is not a drop of juice left in the body, and the poor animal is paralytick before it dies: so void of all taste, nourishment, and flavour, that a man might dine as comfortably on a white fricasee of kid-skin gloves, or chip hats from Leghorn.

As they have discharged the natural colour from their bread, their butchers-meat and poultry, their cutlets, ragouts, fricasees, and sauces of all kinds; so they insist upon having the complexion of their pot-herbs mended, even at the hazard of their lives. Perhaps you will hardly believe they can be so mad as to boil their greens with brass halfpence, so order to improve their colour; and yet nothing more true. Indeed, without this improvement

in the colour, they have no personal merit. They are produced in an artificial soil, and taste of nothing but the dunghills from whence they spring. My cabbage, cauliflower, and 'sparagus, in the country, are as much superior in flavour to those that are sold in Covent-Garden, as my heath mutton is to that of St. James's Market; which, in fact, is neither lamb nor mutton, but something betwixt the two, gorged in the rank fens of Lincoln and Essex, pale, coarse, and frowzy. As for the pork, it is an abominable carnivorous animal, fed with horse-flesh and distillers grains; and the poultry is all rotten, in consequence of a fever occasioned by the infamous practice of sewing up the gut, that they may be the sooner fattened in coops, in consequence of this cruel retention.

Of the fish, I need say nothing in this hot weather, but that it comes sixty, seventy, fourscore, and a hundred miles by land-carriage; a circumstance sufficient, without any comment, to turn a Dutchman's stomach, even if his nose was not saluted in every alley with the sweet flavour of *fresh* mackarel, selling by retail. This is not the season for oysters; nevertheless, it may not be amiss to mention, that the right Colchester are kept in slime-pits, occasionally overflowed by the sea; and that the green colour, so much admired by the voluptuaries of this metropolis, is occasioned by the vitriolick scum which rises on the surface of the stagnant and stinking water. Our rabbits are bred and fed in the poulterer's cellar, where they have neither air nor exercise, consequently they must be firm in flesh, and delicious in flavour; and there is no game to be had for love or money.

It must be owned, that Covent Garden affords some good fruit; which, however, is always engrossed by a few individuals of overgrown fortune, at an exorbitant price; so that little else than the refuse of the market falls to the share of the community;

munity ; and that is distributed by such filthy hands as I cannot look at without loathing. It was but yesterday that I saw a dirty barrow-bunter in the street, cleaning her dusty fruit with her own spittle ; and who knows but some fine lady of St. James's parish might admit into her delicate mouth those very cherries, which had been rolled and moistened between the filthy, and, perhaps, ulcerated chops of a St. Giles's huckster ? I need not dwell upon the pallid, contaminated mash, which they call strawberries ; soiled and tossed by greasy paws through twenty baskets crusted with dirt ; and then presented with the worst milk, thickened with the worst flour into a bad likeness of cream : but the milk itself should not pass unanalyzed, the produce of faded cabbage-leaves and four draff, lowered with hot water, frothed with bruised snails, carried through the streets in open pails, exposed to foul rincings discharged from doors and windows, spittle, snot, and tobacco-quids, from foot-passengers ; overflowings from mud-carts, splatterings from coach-wheels, dirt and trash chucked into it by roguish boys for the joke's-sake ; the spewings of infants, who have slabbered in the tin-measure, which is thrown back in that condition among the milk, for the benefit of the next customer ; and, finally, the vermin that drops from the rags of the nasty drab that vends this precious mixture, under the respectable denomination of milk-maid.

I shall conclude this catalogue of London dainties with that table-beer, guiltless of hops and malt, vapid and nauseous ; much fitter to facilitate the operation of a vomit, than to quench thirst and promote digestion ; the tallowey rancid mass called butter, manufactured with candle-grease and kitchen-stuff ; and their fresh eggs, imported from France and Scotland. Now, all these enormities might be remedied with a very little attention to

the article of police, or civil regulation; but the wise patriots of London have taken it into their heads, that all regulation is inconsistent with liberty; and that every man ought to live in his own way, without restraint. Nay, as there is not sense enough left among them to be discomposed by the nuisances I have mentioned, they may, for aught I care, wallow in the mire of their own pollution.

A companionable man will, undoubtedly, put up with many inconveniencies for the sake of enjoying agreeable society. A facetious friend of mine used to say, the wine could not be bad where the company was agreeable; a maxim which, however, ought to be taken *cum grano salis*: but what is the society of London, that I should be tempted, for its sake, to mortify my senses, and compound with such uncleanness as my soul abhors? All the people I see are too much ingrossed by schemes of interest or ambition, to have any room left for sentiment or friendship. Even in some of my old acquaintance, those schemes and pursuits have obliterated all traces of our former connexion. Conversation is reduced to party disputes and illiberal altercation; social commerce to formal visits and card-playing. If you pick up a diverting original by accident, it may be dangerous to amuse yourself with his oddities: he is generally a tartar at bottom; a sharper, a spy, or a lunatick. Every person you deal with endeavours to over-reach you in the way of business; you are preyed upon by idle mendicants, who beg in the phrase of borrowing, and live upon the spoils of the stranger. Your tradesmen are without conscience, your friends without affection, and your dependants without fidelity.

My letter would swell into a treatise, were I to particularize every cause of offence that fills up the measure of my aversion to this and every other crouded city. Thank Heaven! I am not so far
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sucked into the vortex, but that I can disengage myself without any great effort of philosophy. From this wild uproar of knavery, folly, and impertinence, I shall fly with double relish to the serenity of retirement, the cordial effusions of unre-served friendship, the hospitality and protection of the rural gods; in a word, the *jucunda oblivia vite*, which Horace himself had not taste enough to enjoy.

I have agreed for a good travelling coach and four, at a guinea a-day, for three months certain; and next week we intend to begin our journey to the North, hoping still to be with you by the latter end of October. I shall continue to write from every stage where we make any considerable halt, as often as any thing occurs which I think can afford you the least amusement. In the mean time, I must beg you will superintend the economy of Barns, with respect to my hay and corn harvests; assured that my ground produces nothing but what you may freely call your own. On any other terms, I should be ashamed to subscribe myself your invariable friend,

London, June 8.

Matt. Bramble.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, Bart. of Jesus College,
Oxon.

Dear Phillips,

IN my last, I mentioned my having spent an evening with a society of authors, who seemed to be jealous and afraid of one another. My uncle was not at all surprized to hear me say I was disappointed in their conversation. 'A man may be very entertaining and instructive upon paper,' said he, 'and exceedingly dull in common discourse. I have observed, that those who shine most in private company, are but secondary stars in the constellation of genius. A small stock of ideas is more easily managed, and sooner displayed, than a great quantity crouded together. There is very seldom

any thing extraordinary in the appearance and address of a good writer; whereas a dull author generally distinguishes himself by some oddity or extravagance. For this reason, I fancy that an assembly of Grubs must be very diverting.

My curiosity being excited by this hint, I consulted my friend Dick Ivy, who undertook to gratify it the very next day, which was Sunday last. He carried me to dine with S——, whom you and I have long known by his writings. He lives in the skirts of the town; and every Sunday his house is open to all unfortunate brothers of the quill, whom he treats with beef, pudding, and potatoes, port, punch, and Calvert's intire butt beer. He has fixed upon the first day of the week for the exercise of his hospitality, because some of his guests could not enjoy it on any other, for reasons that I need not explain. I was civilly received in a plain, yet decent habitation, which opened backwards into a very pleasant garden, kept in excellent order; and, indeed, I saw none of the outward signs of authorship, either in the house or the landlord, who is one of those few writers of the age that stand upon their own foundation, without patronage, and above dependence. If there was nothing characteristick in the entertainer, the company made ample amends for his want of singularity.

At two in the afternoon, I found myself one of ten mess-mates seated at table; and I question if the whole kingdom could produce such another assemblage of originals. Among their peculiarities, I do not mention those of dress, which may be purely accidental. What struck me were oddities originally produced by affectation, and afterwards confirmed by habit. One of them wore spectacles at dinner, and another his hat flapped; though (as Ivy told me) the first was noted for having a seaman's eye, when a bailiff was in the wind; and the other was never known to labour under any weakness or defect

defect of vision, except about five years ago, when he was complimented with a couple of black eyes by a player, with whom he had quarrelled in his drink. A third wore a laced stocking, and made use of crutches, because, once in his life, he had been laid up with a broken-leg, though no man could leap over a stick with more agility. A fourth had contracted such an antipathy to the country, that he insisted upon sitting with his back towards the window that looked into the garden; and when a dish of cauliflower was set upon the table, he snuffed up volatile salts to keep him from fainting; yet this delicate person was the son of a cottager, born under a hedge, and had many years run wild among asses on a common. A fifth affected distraction: when spoke to, he always answered from the purpose. Sometimes he suddenly started up, and rapped out a dreadful oath; sometimes he burst out a laughing; then he folded his arms, and sighed; and then he hissed like fifty serpents.

At first, I really thought he was mad; and, as he sat near me, began to be under some apprehensions for my own safety; when our landlord, perceiving me alarmed, assured me aloud that I had nothing to fear. 'The gentleman,' said he, 'is trying to act a part for which he is by no means qualified: if he had all the inclination in the world, it is not in his power to be mad; his spirits are too flat to be kindled into phrenzy.'—'It is no bad p-p-puff, however,' observed a person in a tarnished laced coat: 'affected m-madness w-will p-pass for w-wit w-with nine-ninet-teen out of t-twenty.'—'And affected stuttering for humour,' replied our landlord; 'though, God knows! there is no affinity betwixt them.' It seems, this wag, after having made some abortive attempts in plain speaking, had recourse to this defect, by means of which he frequently extorted the laugh of the company, without the least expence of genius; and that imperfection, which

which he had at first counterfeited, was now become so habitual, that he could not lay it aside.

A certain winking genius, who wore yellow gloves at dinner, had, on his first introduction, taken such offence at S——, because he looked and talked, and ate and drank like any other man, that he spoke contemptuously of his understanding ever after, and never would repeat his visit, until he had exhibited the following proof of his caprice. Wat Wyvil, the poet, having made some unsuccessful advances towards an intimacy with S——, at last gave him to understand, by a third person, that he had written a poem in his praise, and a satire against his person : that if he would admit him to his house, the first should be immediately sent to press ; but that if he persisted in declining his friendship, he would publish the satire without delay. S—— replied, that he looked upon Wyvil's panegyrick as, in effect, a species of infamy, and would resent it accordingly with a good cudgel ; but if he published the satire, he might deserve his compassion, and had nothing to fear from his revenge. Wyvil having considered the alternative, resolved to mortify S—— by printing the panegyrick, for which he received a sound drubbing. Then he swore the peace against the aggressor, who, in order to avoid a prosecution at law, admitted him to his good graces. It was the singularity in S——'s conduct, on this occasion, that reconciled him to the yellow-gloved philosopher, who owned he had some genius ; and from that period cultivated his acquaintance.

Curious to know upon what subjects the several talents of my fellow-guests were employed, I applied to my communicative friend, Dick Ivy, who gave me to understand, that most of them were, or had been, understrappers, or journeymen, to more creditable authors, for whom they translated, collated, and compiled, in the business of book-making ; and that all of them had, at different times, laboured

laboured in the service of our landlord, though they had now set up for themselves in various departments of literature. Not only their talents, but also their nations and dialects, were so various, that our conversation resembled the confusion of tongues at Babel. We had the Irish brogue, the Scotch accent, and foreign idiom, twanged off by the most discordant vociferation; for, as they all spoke together, no man had any chance to be heard, unless he could bawl louder than his fellows. It must be owned, however, there was nothing pedantick in their discourse; they carefully avoided all learned disquisitions, and endeavoured to be facetious; nor did their endeavours always miscarry; some droll repartee passed, and much laughter was excited; and if any individual lost his temper so far as to transgress the bounds of decorum, he was effectually checked by the master of the feast, who exerted a sort of paternal authority over this irritable tribe.

The most learned philosopher of the whole collection, who had been expelled the university for atheism, has made great progress in refutation of Lord Bolingbroke's metaphysical works, which is said to be equally ingenious and orthodox: but, in the mean time, he has been presented to the grand jury as a publick nuisance, for having blasphemed in an alehouse on the Lord's day. The Scotchman gives lectures on the pronunciation of the English language, which he is now publishing by subscription.

The Irishman is a political writer, and goes by the name of My Lord Potatoe. He wrote a pamphlet in vindication of a minister, hoping his zeal would be rewarded with some place or pension; but finding himself neglected in that quarter, he whispered about that the pamphlet was written by the minister himself, and he published an answer to his own production. In this he addressed the author under the title of *your lordship* with such solemnity,
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that the publick swallowed the deceit, and bought up the whole impressiion. The wise politicians of the metropolis declared they were both masterly performances, and chuckled over the flimsy reveries of an ignorant garetteer, as the profound speculations of a veteran statesman, acquainted with all the secrets of the cabinet. The imposture was detected in the sequel, and our Hibernian pamphleteer retains no part of his assumed importance but the bare title of *my lord*, and the upper part of the table at the potatoe-ordinary in Shoe Lane.

Opposite to me sat a Piedmontese, who had obliged the publick with a humorous satire, intituled — ‘The Balance of the English Poets;’ a performance which evinced the great modesty and taste of the author, and, in particular, his intimacy with the elegancies of the English language. The sage, who laboured under the *αγροφοβία*, or *horror of green fields*, had just finished a treatise on practical agriculture; though, in fact, he had never seen corn growing in his life, and was so ignorant of grain, that our entertainer, in the face of the whole company, made him own that a plate of hominy was the best rice-pudding he had ever eat.

The stutterer had almost finished his travels thro’ Europe and part of Asia, without ever budging beyond the liberties of the King’s Bench, except in term-time, with a tip-staff for his companion; and as for little Tim Cropdale, the most facetious member of the whole society, he had happily wound up the catastrophe of a virgin tragedy, from the exhibition of which he promised himself a large fund of profit and reputation. Tim had made shift to live many years by writing novels, at the rate of five pounds a volume; but that branch of business is now engrossed by female authors, who publish merely for the propagation of virtue, with so much ease, and spirit, and delicacy, and knowledge of the human heart, and all in the serene tranquillity of
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high life, that the reader is not only enchanted by their genius, but reformed by their morality.

After dinner, we adjourned into the garden, where I observed Mr. S—— give a short separate audience to every individual in a small remote filbert-walk, from whence most of them dropped off one after another, without farther ceremony; but they were replaced by fresh recruits of the same clan, who came to make an afternoon's visit; and, among others, a spruce bookseller, called Birkin, who rode his own gelding, and made his appearance in a pair of new jemmy boots, with massy spurs of plate. It was not without reason that this midwife of the Muses used exercise on horseback, for he was too fat to walk on foot; and he underwent some sarcasms from Tim Cropdale, on his unwieldy size and inaptitude for motion. Birkin, who took umbrage at this poor author's petulance, in presuming to joke upon a man so much richer than himself, told him he was not so unwieldy but that he could move the Marshalsea court for a writ, and even overtake him with it, if he did not very speedily come and settle accounts with him, respecting the expence of publishing his last Ode to the King of Prussia, of which he had sold but three, and one of them was to Whitefield the Methodist. Tim affected to receive this intimation with good humour, saying he expected in a post or two, from Potsdam, a poem of thanks from his Prussian majesty, who knew very well how to pay poets in their own coin; but, in the mean time, he proposed that Mr. Birkin and he should run three times round the garden for a bowl of punch, to be drank at Ashley's in the evening, and he would run boots against stockings. The bookseller, who valued himself upon his mettle, was persuaded to accept the challenge, and he forthwith resigned his boots to Cropdale; who, when he had put them on, was no bad representation of Captain Pistol in the play.

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Every thing being adjusted, they started together with great impetuosity, and, in the second round, Birkin had clearly the advantage, *larding the lean earth as he puffed along*. Cropdale had no mind to contest the victory farther; but in a twinkling disappeared through the back-door of the garden, which opened into a private lane that had communication with the high road. The spectators immediately began to halloo—‘Stole away;’ and Birkin set off in pursuit of him with great eagerness; but he had not advanced twenty yards in the lane, when a thorn running into his foot, sent him hopping into the garden, roaring with pain, and swearing with vexation. When he was delivered from this annoyance by the Scotchman, who had been bred to surgery, he looked about him, wildly exclaiming—‘Sure the fellow will not be such a rogue as to run clear away with my boots!’ Our landlord having reconnoitered the shoes he had left, which indeed hardly deserved that name—‘Pray,’ said he, ‘Mr. Birkin, were not your boots made of calf skin?’—‘Calf-skin or cow-skin,’ replied the other, ‘I will find a slip of sheep-skin that will do his business. I lost twenty pounds by his farce, which you persuaded me to buy. I am out of pocket five pounds by his damned ode; and now this pair of boots, bran new, cost me thirty shillings, as per receipt. But this affair of the boots is felony, transportation. I will have the dog indicted at the Old Bailey; I will, Mr. S——. I will be revenged, even though I should lose my debt in consequence of his conviction.’

Mr. S—— said nothing at present, but accommodated him with a pair of shoes; then ordered his servant to rub him down, and comfort him with a glass of rum punch, which seemed in a great measure to cool the rage of his indignation. ‘After all,’ said our landlord, ‘this is no more than a *humbug* in the way of wit, though it deserves a more respectable

respectable epithet, when considered as an effort of invention. Tim being, I suppose, out of credit with the cordwainer, fell upon this ingenious expedient to supply the want of shoes, knowing that Mr. Birkin, who loves humour, would himself relish the joke upon a little recollection. Cropdale literally lives by his wit, which he has exercised upon all his friends in their turns. He once borrowed my poney for five or six days to go to Salisbury, and sold him in Smithfield at his return. This was a joke of such a serious nature, that, in the first transports of my passion, I had some thoughts of prosecuting him for horse-stealing; and even when my resentment had in some measure subsided, as he industriously avoided me, I vowed I would take satisfaction on his ribs with the first opportunity. One day, seeing him at some distance in the street coming towards me, I began to prepare my cane for action, and walked in the shadow of a porter, that he might not perceive me soon enough to make his escape; but, in the very instant I had lifted up the instrument of correction, I found Tim Cropdale metamorphosed into a miserable blind wretch, feeling his way with a long stick from post to post, and rolling about two bald unlighted orbs instead of eyes. I was exceedingly shocked at having so narrowly escaped the concern and disgrace that would have attended such a misapplication of vengeance: but next day Tim prevailed upon a friend of mine to come and solicit my forgiveness, and offer his note, payable in six weeks, for the price of the poney. This gentleman gave me to understand, that the blind man was no other than Cropdale; who, having seen me advancing, and guessing my intent, had immediately converted himself into the object aforesaid. I was so diverted at the ingenuity of the evasion, that I agreed to pardon his offence; refusing his note, however, that I might keep a prosecution for felony hanging over his

head, as a security for his future good behaviour. But Timothy would by no means trust himself in my hands till the note was accepted; then he made his appearance at my door as a blind beggar, and imposed in such a manner upon my man, who had been his old acquaintance and pot-companion, that the fellow threw the door in his face, and even threatened to give him the bastinado. Hearing a noise in the hall, I went thither, and immediately recollecting the figure I had passed in the street, accosted him by his own name, to the unspeakable astonishment of the footman.'

Birkin declared he loved a joke as well as another; but asked if any of the company could tell where Mr. Cropdale lodged, that he might send him a proposal about restitution, before the boots should be made away with. 'I would willingly give him a pair of new shoes,' said he, 'and half a guinea into the bargain, for the boots, which fitted me like a glove; and I shall not be able to get the fellow of them till the good weather for riding is over.' The stuttering wit declared, that the only secret which Cropdale ever kept, was the place of his lodgings; but he believed that, during the heats of summer, he commonly took his repose upon a bulk, or indulged himself, in fresco, with one of the kennel-nymphs, under the portico of St. Martin's church. 'Pox on him,' cried the bookseller, 'he might as well have taken my whip and spurs; in that case, he might have been tempted to steal another horse, and then he would have rid to the devil of course.'

After coffee, I took my leave of Mr. S——, with proper acknowledgments of his civility, and was extremely well pleased with the entertainment of the day, though not yet satisfied, with respect to the nature of this connection, betwixt a man of character in the literary world, and a parcel of authorlings, who, in all probability, would never be
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able to acquire any degree of reputation by their labours. On this head I interrogated my conductor, Dick Ivy, who answered me to this effect: 'One would imagine S—— had some view to his own interest in giving countenance and assistance to those people, whom he knows to be bad men, as well as bad writers; but, if he has any such view, he will find himself disappointed; for if he is so vain as to imagine he can make them subservient to his schemes of profit or ambition, they are cunning enough to make him their property in the mean time. There is not one of the company you have seen to-day, myself excepted, who does not owe him particular obligations. One of them he bailed out of a spunging house, and afterwards paid the debt; another he translated into his family, and cloathed, when he was turned out half naked from jail, in consequence of an act for the relief of insolvent debtors; a third, who was reduced to a woollen night-cap, and lived upon sheeps trotters up three pair of stairs backward in Butcher Row, he took into present pay and free quarters, and enabled him to appear as a gentleman, without having the fear of sheriffs officers before his eyes. Those who are in distress he supplies with money when he has it, and with his credit when he is out of cash. When they want business, he either finds employment for them in his own service, or recommends them to booksellers, to execute some project he has formed for their subsistence. They are always welcome to his table (which, though plain, is plentiful) and to his good offices, as far as they will go; and when they see occasion, they make use of his name with the most petulant familiarity; nay, they do not even scruple to arrogate to themselves the merit of some of his performances, and have been known to sell their own lucubrations as the produce of his brain. The Scotchman you saw at dinner once personated him at an alehouse in

West Smithfield, and, in the character of S——, had his head broke by a cow-keeper, for having spoke disrespectfully of the Christian religion; but he took the law of him in his own person, and the assailant was fain to give him ten pounds to withdraw his action.'

I observed, that all this appearance of liberality on the side of Mr. S—— was easily accounted for, on the supposition that they flattered him in private, and engaged his adversaries in publick; and yet I was astonished when I recollected that I had often seen this writer virulently abused in papers, poems, and pamphlets, and not a pen was drawn in his defence. 'But you will be more astonished,' said he, 'when I assure you those very guests whom you saw at his table to-day were the authors of great part of that abuse; and he himself is well aware of their particular favours, for they are all eager to detect and betray one another.'—'But this is doing the devil's work for nothing,' cried I. 'What should induce them to revile their benefactor without provocation?'—'Envy,' answered Dick, 'is the general incitement. But they are galled by an additional scourge of provocation: S—— directs a literary journal, in which their productions are necessarily brought to trial; and tho' many of them have been treated with such lenity and favour as they little deserved, yet the slightest censure, such as perhaps could not be avoided with any pretensions to candour and impartiality, has rankled in the hearts of those authors to such a degree, that they have taken immediate vengeance on the critic in anonymous libels, letters, and lampoons. Indeed, all the writers of the age, good, bad, and indifferent, from the moment he assumed this office, became his enemies, either professed, or in petto, except those of his friends, who knew they had nothing to fear from his strictures; and he must be a wiser man than me, who can tell what advantage

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tage or satisfaction he derives from having brought such a nest of hornets about his ears.'

I owned that was a point which might deserve consideration ; but still I expressed a desire to know his real motives for continuing his friendship to a set of rascals equally ungrateful and insignificant. He said he did not pretend to assign any reasonable motive ; that, if the truth must be told, the man was, in point of conduct, a most incorrigible fool ; that, though he pretended to have a knack at hitting off characters, he blundered strangely in the distribution of his favours, which were generally bestowed on the most undeserving of those who had recourse to his assistance ; that, indeed, this preference was not so much owing to a want of discernment as to a want of resolution, for he had not fortitude enough to resist the importunity even of the most worthless ; and, as he did not know the value of money, there was very little merit in parting with it so easily ; that his pride was gratified in seeing himself courted by such a number of literary dependents ; that, probably, he delighted in hearing them expose and traduce one another ; and, finally, from their information, he became acquainted with all the transactions of Grub-Street, which he had some thoughts of compiling, for the entertainment of the publick.

I could not help suspecting, from Dick's discourse, that he had some particular grudge against S—, upon whose conduct he had put the worst construction it would bear ; and, by dint of cross-examination, I found he was not at all satisfied with the character which had been given in the review of his last performance, though it had been treated civilly, in consequence of the author's application to the critick. By all accounts, S— is not without weakness and caprice ; but he is certainly good-humoured and civilized : nor do I find that there

is any thing overbearing, cruel, or implacable, in his disposition.

I have dwelt so long upon authors, that you will perhaps suspect I intend to enrol myself among the fraternity ; but, if I were actually qualified for the profession, it is at best but a desperate resource against starving, as it affords no provision for old age and infirmity. Salmon, at the age of four-score, is now in a garret, compiling matter, at a guinea a sheet, for a modern historian, who, in point of age, might be his grandchild ; and Psalmonazar, after having drudged half a century in the literary mill, in all the simplicity and abstinence of an Asiatick, subsists upon the charity of a few booksellers, just sufficient to keep him from the parish. I think Guy, who was himself a bookseller, ought to have appropriated one wing or ward of his hospital to the use of decayed authors ; though, indeed, there is neither hospital, college, nor workhouse, within the bills of mortality, large enough to contain the poor of this society, composed, as it is, from the refuse of every other profession.

I know not whether you will find any amusement in this account of an odd race of mortals, whose constitution had, I own, greatly interested the curiosity of your's,

London, June 10.

J. Melford.

To Miss Lætitia Willis, at Gloucester.

My dear Letty,

THERE is something on my spirits which I should not venture to communicate by the post, but having the opportunity of Mrs. Brentwood's return, I seize it eagerly to disburden my poor heart, which is oppressed with fear and vexation. O, Letty ! what a miserable situation it is to be without a friend to whom one can apply for counsel and consolation in distress ! I hinted in my last that one Mr. Barton had been very particular in his civilities : I

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can no longer mistake his meaning ; he has formally professed himself my admirer ; and, after a thousand assiduities, perceiving I made but a cold return to his addresses, he had recourse to the mediation of Lady Grislin, who has acted the part of a very warm advocate in his behalf. But, my dear Willis, her Ladyship over acts her part : she not only expatiates on the ample fortune, the great connections, and the unblemished character of Mr. Barton, but she takes the trouble to catechize me ; and, two days ago, peremptorily told me, that a girl of my age could not possibly resist so many considerations, if her heart was not pre-engaged.

This insinuation threw me into such a flutter, that she could not but observe my disorder, and, presuming upon the discovery, insisted upon my making her the confidante of my passion. But, although I had not such command of myself as to conceal the emotion of my heart, I am not such a child as to disclose it's secrets to a person who would certainly use them to it's prejudice. I told her it was no wonder if I was out of countenance at her introducing a subject of conversation so unsuitable to my years and inexperience ; that I believed Mr. Barton was a very worthy gentleman, and I was much obliged to him for his good opinion ; but the affections were involuntary, and mine, in particular, had as yet made no concessions in his favour. She shook her head with an air of distrust that made me tremble ; and observed, that, if my affections were free, they would submit to the decision of prudence, especially when enforced by the authority of those who had a right to direct my conduct. This remark implied a design to interest my uncle or my aunt, perhaps my brother, in behalf of Mr. Barton's passion ; and I am sadly afraid that my aunt is already gained over. Yesterday in the forenoon he had been walking with us in the Park, and stopping in our return at a toy-shop, he presented her with a
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very fine snuff-box, and me with a gold etuis, which I resolutely refused, till she commanded me to accept it on pain of her displeasure: nevertheless, being still unsatisfied with respect to the propriety of receiving this toy, I signified my doubts to my brother, who said he would consult my uncle on the subject, and seemed to think Mr. Barton had been rather premature in his presents.

What will be the result of this consultation, Heaven knows; but I am afraid it will produce an explanation with Mr. Barton; who will, no doubt, avow his passion, and solicit their consent to a connection which my soul abhors; for, my dearest Letty, it is not in my power to love Mr. Barton, even if my heart was untouched by any other tenderness. Not that there is any thing disagreeable about his person, but there is a total want of that nameless charm which captivates and controuls the enchanted spirit; at least, he appears to me to have this defect: but if he had all the engaging qualifications which a man can possess, they would be excited in vain against that constancy, which, I flatter myself, is the characteristick of my nature. No, my dear Willis, I may be involved in fresh troubles, and I believe I shall, from the importunities of this gentleman, and the violence of my relations; but my heart is incapable of change.

You know I put no faith in dreams, and yet I have been much disturbed by one that visited me last night. I thought I was in a church, where a certain person whom you know was on the point of being married to my aunt; that the clergyman was Mr. Barton; and that poor forlorn I stood weeping in a corner, half naked, and without shoes or stockings. Now I know there is nothing so childish as to be moved by those vain illusions; but, nevertheless, in spite of all my reason, this hath made a strong impression upon my mind, which begins to be very gloomy. Indeed, I have another more substantial

substantial cause of affliction; I have some religious scruples, my dear friend, which lie heavy on my conscience. I was persuaded to go to the Tabernacle, where I heard a discourse that affected me deeply. I have prayed fervently to be enlightened; but as yet I am not sensible of those inward motions, those operations of grace, which are the signs of a regenerated spirit; and therefore I begin to be in terrible apprehensions about the state of my poor soul. Some of our family have had very uncommon accessions, particularly my aunt and Mrs. Jenkins, who sometimes speak as if they were really inspired; so that I am not like to want for either exhortation or example, to purify my thoughts, and recal them from the vanities of this world, which indeed I would willingly resign, if it was in my power; but to make this sacrifice, I must be enabled by such assistance from above as hath not yet been indulged to your unfortunate friend,

June 10.

Lydia Melford.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, of Jesus College, Oxon.

Dear Phillips,

The moment I received your letter I began to execute your commission. With the assistance of mine host at the Bull and Gate, I discovered the place to which your fugitive valet had retreated, and taxed him with his dishonesty. The fellow was in manifest confusion at the sight of me, but he denied the charge with great confidence, till I told him, that if he would give up the watch, which was a family piece, he might keep the money and the cloaths, and go to the devil his own way at his leisure; but if he rejected this proposal, I would deliver him forthwith to the constable, whom I had provided for that purpose, and he would carry him before the justice without farther delay. After some hesitation, he desired to speak with me in the next room, where he produced the watch with all its appendages,

appendages, and I have delivered it to our landlord, to be sent you by the first safe conveyance. So much for business.

I shall grow vain, upon your saying you find entertainment in my letters; barren, as they certainly are, of incident and importance; because your amusement must arise, not from the matter, but from the manner, which you know is all my own. Animated, therefore, by the approbation of a person whose nice taste and consummate judgment I can no longer doubt, I will cheerfully proceed with our memoirs. As it is determined we shall set out next week for Yorkshire, I went to-day in the afternoon with my uncle to see a carriage, belonging to a coach-maker in our neighbourhood. Turning down a narrow lane, behind Long Acre, we perceived a crowd of people standing at a door; which, it seems, opened into a kind of methodist meeting, and were informed, that a footman was then holding forth to the congregation within. Curious to see this phenomenon, we squeezed into the place with much difficulty; and who should this preacher be, but the identical Humphry Clinker. He had finished his sermon, and given out a psalm, the first stave of which he sung with peculiar graces. But if we were astonished to see Clinker in the pulpit, we were altogether confounded at finding all the females of our family among the audience. There was Lady Grislin, Mrs. Tabitha Bramble, Mrs. Winifred Jenkins, my sister Liddy, and Mr. Barton, and all of them joined in the psalmody with strong marks of devotion.

I could hardly keep my gravity on this ludicrous occasion; but old Square-toes was differently affected. The first thing that struck him, was the presumption of his lacquey, whom he commanded to come down, with such an air of authority, as Humphry did not think proper to disregard. He descended immediately, and all the people were in commotion. Bar-

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ton looked exceedingly sheepish, Lady Grislin flirted her fan, Mrs. Tabby groaned in the spirit, Liddy changed countenance, and Mrs. Jenkins sobbed as if her heart was breaking. My uncle, with a sneer, asked pardon of the ladies, for having interrupted their devotion, saying, he had particular business with the preacher, whom he ordered to call a hackney-coach. This being immediately brought up to the end of the lane, he handed Liddy into it, and my aunt and I following him, we drove home, without taking any farther notice of the rest of the company, who still remained in silent astonishment.

Mr. Bramble, perceiving Liddy in great trepidation, assumed a milder aspect, bidding her be under no concern, for he was not at all displeased at any thing she had done. 'I have no objection,' said he, 'to your being religiously inclined; but I do not think my servant is a proper ghostly director, for a devotee of your sex and character; if, in fact, (as I rather believe) your aunt is not the sole conductress of this machine.' Mrs. Tabitha made no answer, but threw up the whites of her eyes, as if in the act of ejaculation. Poor Liddy said she had no right to the title of a devotee; that she thought there was no harm in hearing a pious discourse, even if it came from a footman, especially as her aunt was present; but that if she had erred from ignorance, she hoped he would excuse it, as she could not bear the thoughts of living under his displeasure. The old gentleman, pressing her hand with a tender smile, said she was a good girl, and that he did not believe her capable of doing any thing that could give him the least umbrage or disgust.

When we arrived at our lodgings, he commanded Mr. Clinker to attend him up stairs, and spoke to him in these words: 'Since you are called upon by the spirit to preach and to teach, it is high time to lay aside the livery of an earthly master; and, for
my

my part, I am unworthy to have an apostle in my service.—‘I hope,’ said Humphry, ‘I have not failed in my duty to your honour. I should be a vile wretch if I did, considering the misery from which your charity and compassion relieved me. But having an inward admonition of the spirit—‘An admonition of the devil!’ cried the squire, in a passion. ‘What admonition, you blockhead? What right has such a fellow as you to set up for a reformer?’—‘Begging your honour’s pardon,’ replied Clinker, ‘may not the new light of God’s grace shine upon the poor and the ignorant in their humility, as well as upon the wealthy, and the philosopher in all his pride of human learning?’—‘What you imagine to be the new light of grace,’ said his master, ‘I take to be a deceitful vapour, glimmering through a crack in your upper story. In a word, Mr. Clinker, I will have no light in my family but what pays the king’s taxes, unless it be the light of reason, which you do not pretend to follow.’

‘Ah, Sir?’ cried Humphry, ‘the light of reason is no more in comparison to the light I mean, than a farthing candle to the sun at noon.’—‘Very true,’ said uncle; ‘the one will serve to shew you your way, and the other to dazzle and confound your weak brain. Hark ye, Clinker, you are either an hypocritical knave, or a wrong-headed enthusiast; and, in either case, unfit for my service. If you are a quack in sanctity and devotion, you will find it an easy matter to impose upon silly women, and others of crazed understanding, who will contribute lavishly for your support. If you are really seduced by the reveries of a disturbed imagination, the sooner you lose your senses entirely, the better for yourself and the community. In that case, some charitable person might provide you with a dark room and clean straw in Bedlam, where it would not be in your power to infect others with your fanaticism: whereas, if you have just reflection

tion enough left to maintain the character of a chosen vessel in the meetings of the godly, you and your hearers will be misled by a Will'i the-wisp, from one error into another, till you are plunged into religious frenzy ; and then, perhaps, you will hang yourself in despair.'—'Which the Lord of his infinite mercy forbid!' exclaimed the affrighted Clinker. 'It is very possible I may be under the temptation of the devil, who wants to wreck me on the rocks of spiritual pride. Your honour says I am either a knave or a madman ; now, as I'll assure your honour I am no knave, it follows that I must be mad ; therefore, I beseech your honour, upon my knees, to take my case into consideration, that means may be used for my recovery.'

The squire could not help smiling at the poor fellow's simplicity, and promised to take care of him, provided he would mind the business of his place, without running after the new-light of methodism : but Mrs. Tabitha took offence at his humility, which she interpreted into poorness of spirit and worldlymindedness. She upbraided him with the want of courage to suffer for conscience sake. She observed, that if he should lose his place for bearing testimony to the truth, Providence would not fail to find him another, perhaps more advantageous ; and, declaring that it could not be very agreeable to live in a family where an inquisition was established, retired to another room in great agitation.

My uncle followed her with a significant look ; then, turning to the preacher—'You hear what my sister says. If you cannot live with me upon such terms as I have prescribed, the vineyards of methodism lies before you, and she seems very well disposed to reward your labour.'—'I would not willingly give offence to any soul upon earth,' answered Humphry : 'her ladyship has been very good to me ever since we came to London ; and surely she has a heart turned for religious exercises ; and

both she and Lady Grislin sing psalms and hymns like two cherubims. But, at the same time, I'm bound to love and obey your honour. It becometh not such a poor ignorant fellow as me, to hold dispute with gentlemen of rank and learning. As for the matter of knowledge, I am no more than a beast in comparison of your honour; therefore I submit; and, with God's grace, I will follow you to the world's end, if you don't think me too far gone to be out of confinement.'

His master promised to keep him for some time longer on trial: then desired to know in what manner Lady Grislin and Mr. Barton came to join their religious society. He told him that her ladyship was the person who first carried my aunt and sister to the Tabernacle, whither he attended them, and had his devotion kindled by Mr. W——'s preaching; that he was confirmed in this new way by the preacher's sermons, which he had bought and studied with great attention; that his discourse and prayers had brought over Mrs. Jenkins and the house-maid to the same way of thinking; but as for Mr. Barton, he had never seen him at service before this day, when he came in company with Lady Grislin. Humphry, moreover, owned that he had been encouraged to mount the rostrum by the example and success of a weaver, who was much followed as a powerful minister: that on his first trial, he found himself under such strong impulses, as made him believe he was certainly moved by the spirit; and that he had assisted in Lady Grislin's, and several private houses, at exercises of devotion.

Mr. Bramble was no sooner informed that her ladyship had acted as the primum mobile of this confederacy, than he concluded she had only made use of Clinker as a tool, subservient to the execution of some design, to the true secret of which he was an utter stranger. He observed, that her lady-

ship's brain was a perfect mill for projects ; and that she and Tabby had certainly engaged in some secret treaty, the nature of which he could not comprehend. I told him I thought it was no difficult matter to perceive the drift of Mrs. Tabitha, which was to ensnare the heart of Barton, and that in all likelihood my Lady Griekin acted as her auxiliary : that this supposition would account for their endeavours to convert him to methodism ; an event which would occasion a connexion of souls that might be easily improved into a matrimonial union.

My uncle seemed to be much diverted by the thoughts of this scheme's succeeding ; but I gave him to understand that Barton was pre-engaged ; that he had the day before made a present of an etuis to Liddy, which her aunt had obliged her to receive, with a view, no doubt, to countenance her own accepting of a snuff-box at the same time ; that my sister having made me acquainted with this incident, I had desired an explanation of Mr. Barton, who declared his intentions were honourable, and expressed his hope that I would have no objections to his alliance ; that I had thanked him for the honour he intended our family ; but told him, it would be necessary to consult her uncle and aunt, who were her guardians ; and their approbation being obtained, I could have no objection to his proposal ; though I was persuaded that no violence would be offered to my sister's inclinations, in a transaction that so nearly interested the happiness of her future life : that he had assured me, he should never think of availing himself of a guardian's authority, unless he could render his addressee agreeable to the young lady herself ; and that he would immediately demand permission of Mr. and Miss Bramble, to make Liddy a tender of his hand and fortune.

The squire was not insensible to the advantages of such a match, and declared he would promote it

with all his influence : but when I took notice that there seemed to be an aversion on the side of Liddy, he said he would sound her on the subject ; and if her reluctance was such as could not be easily overcome, he would civilly decline the proposal of Mr. Barton ; for he thought that, in the choice of a husband, a young woman ought not to sacrifice the feelings of her heart for any consideration upon earth.' ' Liddy is not so desperate,' said he, ' as to worship fortune at such an expence.' I take it for granted, this whole affair will end in smoke ; though there seems to be a storm brewing in the quarter of Mrs. Tabby, who sat with all the sullen dignity of silence at dinner, seemingly pregnant with complaint and expostulation. As she hath certainly marked Barton for her own prey, she cannot possibly favour his suit to Liddy ; and therefore I expect something extraordinary will attend his declaring himself my sister's admirer. This declaration will certainly be made in form, as soon as the lover can pick up resolution enough to stand the brunt of Mrs. Tabby's disappointment ; for he is, without doubt, aware of her designs upon his person. The particulars of the *denouement* you shall know in due season : meanwhile I am always your's,
London, June 10. J. Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Lewis,

THE deceitful calm was of short duration. I am plunged again in a sea of vexation, and the complaints in my stomach and bowels are returned ; so that I suppose I shall be disabled from prosecuting the excursion I had planned. What the devil had I to do, to come a plague-hunting with a leash of females in my train ? Yesterday my precious sister (who, by the bye, has been for some time a professed methodist) came into my apartment, attended by Mr. Barton, and desired an audience
with

with a very stately air. 'Brother,' said she, 'this gentleman has something to propose, which, I flatter myself, will be the more acceptable, as it will rid you of a troublesome companion.' Then Mr. Barton proceeded to this effect: 'I am, indeed, extremely ambitious of being allied to your family, Mr. Bramble; and I hope you will see no cause to interpose your authority.'—'As for authority,' said Tabby, interrupting him with some warmth, 'I know of none that he has a right to use on this occasion. If I pay him the compliment of making him acquainted with the step I intend to take, it is all he can expect in reason. This is as much as I believe he would do by me, if he intended to change his own situation in life.—In a word, brother, I am so sensible of Mr. Barton's extraordinary merit, that I have been prevailed upon to alter my resolution of living a single life, and to put my happiness in his hands, by vesting him with a legal title to my person and fortune, such as they are. The business at present, is to have the writings drawn; and I shall be obliged to you, if you will recommend a lawyer to me for that purpose.'

You may guess what an effect this overture had upon me; who, from the information of my nephew, expected that Barton was to make a formal declaration of his passion for Liddy. I could not help gazing in silent astonishment, alternately at Tabby, and her supposed admirer; which last hung his head in the most awkward confusion for a few minutes, and then retired, on pretence of being suddenly seized with a vertigo. Mrs. Tabitha affected much concern, and would have had him make use of a bed in the house; but he insisted on going home, that he might have recourse to some drops which he kept for such emergencies; and his innamorata acquiesced. In the mean time, I was exceedingly puzzled at this adventure, (though I suspected the truth,) and did not know in what

manner to demean myself towards Mrs. Tabitha; when Jerry came in, and told me, he had just seen Mr. Barton alight from his chariot at Lady Grifkin's door. This incident seemed to threaten a visit from her ladyship; with which we were honoured accordingly, in less than half an hour. 'I find,' said she, 'there has been a match of cross-purposes among you, good folks; and I am come to set you to rights.' So saying, she presented me with the following billet.

'Dear Sir,

'I no sooner recollected myself from the extreme confusion I was thrown into by that unlucky mistake of your sister, than I thought it my duty to assure you, that my devoirs to Mrs. Bramble never exceeded the bounds of ordinary civility; and that my heart is unalterably fixed upon Miss Liddy Melford, as I had the honour to declare to her brother when he questioned me upon that subject. Lady Grifkin has been so good as to charge herself, not only with the delivery of this note, but also with the task of undeceiving Mrs. Bramble, for whom I have the most profound respect and veneration; though my affection, being otherwise engaged, is no longer in the power of, Sir, your very humble servant,

'Ralph Barton.'

Having cast my eyes over this billet, I told her ladyship that I would no longer retard the friendly office she had undertaken; and I and Jerry forthwith retired into another room. There we soon perceived the conversation grow very warm betwixt the two ladies; and at length could distinctly hear certain terms of altercation, which we could no longer delay interrupting, with any regard to decorum. When we entered the scene of contention, we found Liddy had joined the disputants, and stood trembling betwixt them, as if she had been afraid they would have proceeded to something

thing more practical than words. Lady Griskin's face was like the full-moon in a storm of wind, glaring, fiery, and portentous ; while Tabby looked grim and ghastly, with an aspect breathing discord and dismay. Our appearance put a stop to their mutual revilings : but her ladyship turning to me—
' Cousin,' said she, ' I cannot help saying I have met with a very ungrateful return from this lady for the pains I have taken to serve her family.'—
' My family is much obliged to your ladyship,' cried Tabby, with a kind of hysterical giggle ;
' but we have no right to the good offices of such an honourable go-between.'—
' But, for all that, good Mrs. Tabitha Bramble,' resumed the other, ' I shall be content with the reflection, that virtue is its own reward ; and it shall not be my fault if you continue to make yourself ridiculous.—Mr. Bramble, who has no little interest of his own to serve, will, no doubt, contribute all in his power to promote a match betwixt Mr. Barton and his niece, which will be equally honourable and advantageous—and, I dare say, Miss Liddy herself will have no objection to a measure so well calculated to make her happy in life.'—
' I beg your ladyship's pardon,' exclaimed Liddy, with great vivacity ; ' I have nothing but misery to expect from such a measure ; and I hope my guardians will have too much compassion, to barter my peace of mind for any consideration of interest or fortune.'—
' Upon my word, Miss Liddy !' said she, ' you have profited by the example of your good aunt. I comprehend your meaning, and will explain it when I have a proper opportunity. In the mean time, I shall take my leave.—Madam, your most obedient and devoted humble servant,' said she, advancing close up to my sister, and curtsying so low, that I thought she intended to squat herself down on the floor. This salutation Tabby returned with equal solemnity ; and the expression of the two faces, while

while they continued in this attitude, would be no bad subject for a pencil like that of the incomparable Hogarth, if any such should ever appear again in these times of dulness and degeneracy.

Jerry accompanied her ladyship to her house, that he might have an opportunity to restore the etuis to Barton, and advise him to give up his suit, which was so disagreeable to his sister; against whom, however, he returned much irritated. Lady Grisikin had assured him that Liddy's heart was pre-occupied; and immediately the idea of Wilson recurring to his imagination, his family-pride took the alarm: he denounced vengeance against that adventurer, and was disposed to be very peremptory with his sister; but I desired he would suppress his resentment, until I should have talked with her in private.

The poor girl, when I earnestly pressed her on this head, owned, with a flood of tears, that Wilson had actually come to the Hot-Well at Bristol, and even introduced himself into our lodgings as a Jew pedlar; but that nothing had passed betwixt them, farther than her begging him to withdraw immediately, if he had any regard for her peace of mind; that he had disappeared accordingly, after having attempted to prevail upon my sister's maid to deliver a letter; which, however, she refused to receive, though she had consented to carry a message, importing, that he was a gentleman of a good family; and that, in a very little time, he would avow his passion in that character. She confessed, that although he had not kept his word in that particular, he was not yet altogether indifferent to her affection; but solemnly promised she would never carry on any correspondence with him, or any other admirer, for the future, without the privity and approbation of her brother and me.

By this declaration, she made her own peace with Jerry; but the hot-headed boy is more than ever incensed

incensed against Wilson, whom he now considers as an impostor, that harbours some infamous design upon the honour of his family. As for Barton, he was not a little mortified to find his present returned, and his addresses so unfavourably received : but he is not a man to be deeply affected by such disappointments ; and I know not whether he is not as well pleased with being discarded by Liddy, as he would have been with a permission to prosecute his pretensions, at the risque of being every day exposed to the revenge or machinations of Tabby, who is not to be slighted with impunity. I had not much time to moralize on these occurrences ; for the house was visited by a constable and his gang, with a warrant from Justice Buzzard, to search the box of Humphry Clinker, my footman, who was just apprehended as a highwayman. This incident threw the whole family into confusion. My sister scolded the constable for presuming to enter the lodgings of a gentleman on such an errand, without having first asked and obtained permission ; her maid was frightened into fits ; and Liddy shed tears of compassion for the unfortunate Clinker ; in whose box, however, nothing was found to confirm the suspicion of robbery.

For my own part, I made no doubt of the fellow's being mistaken for some other person ; and I went directly to the justice, in order to procure his discharge : but there I found the matter much more serious than I expected. Poor Clinker stood trembling at the bar, surrounded by thief-takers ; and a little distance, a thick, squat fellow, a postilion, his accuser, who had seized him in the street, and swore positively to his person, that the said Clinker had, on the fifteenth day of March last, on Blackheath, robbed a gentleman in a post-chaise, which he (the postilion) drove. This deposition was suffered to justify his commitment ; and he was sent accordingly to Clerkenwell prison, whither Jerry accompanied

accompanied him in the coach, in order to recommend him properly to the keeper, that he may want for no convenience which the place affords.

The spectators, who assembled to see this highwayman, were sagacious enough to discern something very villainous in his aspect ; which (begging their pardon) is the very picture of simplicity ; and the justice himself put a very unfavourable construction upon some of his answers, which, he said, favoured of the ambiguity and equivocation of an old offender ; but, in my opinion, it would have been more just and humane to impute them to the confusion into which we may suppose a poor country lad to be thrown on such an occasion. I am still persuaded he is innocent ; and, in this persuasion, I can do no less than use my utmost endeavours that he may not be oppressed. I shall, to-morrow, send my nephew to wait on the gentleman who was robbed, and beg he will have the humanity to go and see the prisoner ; that, in case he should find him quite different from the person of the highwayman, he may bear testimony in his behalf. Howsoever it may fare with Clinker, this cursed affair will be to me productive of intolerable chagrin. I have already caught a dreadful cold, by rushing into the open air from the justice's parlour, where I had been stewing in the crowd ; and though I should not be laid up with the gout, as I believe I shall, I must stay at London for some weeks, till this poor devil comes to his trial at Rochester ; so that, in all probability, my Northern expedition is blown up.

If you can find any thing in your philosophical budget, to console me in the midst of these distresses and apprehensions, pray let it be communicated to your unfortunate friend,

London, June 12.

Matt. Bramble.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, Bart. of Jesus College,
Oxon.

Dear Wat,

THE farce is finished, and another piece of a graver cast brought upon the stage. Our aunt made a desperate attack upon Barton, who had no other way of saving himself but by leaving her in possession of the field, and avowing his pretensions to Liddy, by whom he has been rejected in his turn. Lady Griskin acted as his advocate and agent on this occasion, with such zeal as embroiled her with Mrs. Tabitha, and a high scene of altercation passed betwixt these two religionists, which might have come to action, had not my uncle interposed. They are, however, reconciled, in consequence of an event which hath involved us all in trouble and disquiet. You must know, the poor preacher, Humphry Clinker, is now exercising his ministry among the felons in Clerkenwell prison. A postilion having sworn a robbery against him, no bail could be taken, and he was committed to jail, notwithstanding all the remonstrances and interest my uncle could make in his behalf.

All things considered, the poor fellow cannot possibly be guilty; and, yet, I believe, he runs some risque of being hanged. Upon his examination, he answered with such hesitation and reserve, as persuaded most of the people who crowded the place that he was really a knave; and the justice's remarks confirmed their opinion. Exclusive of my uncle and myself, there was only one person who seemed inclined to favour the culprit. He was a young man, well dressed; and, from the manner in which he cross-examined the evidence, we took it for granted, that he was a student in one of the inns of court. He freely checked the justice for some uncharitable inferences he made to the prejudice

dice of the prisoner; and even ventured to dispute with his worship on certain points of law.

My uncle, provoked at the unconnected and dubious answers of Clinker, who seemed in danger of falling a sacrifice to his own simplicity, exclaimed—‘In the name of God, if you are innocent, say so!’—‘No!’ cried he, ‘God forbid that I should call myself innocent, while my conscience is burdened with sin!’—‘What, then, you did commit this robbery?’ resumed his master. ‘No sure!’ said he. ‘Blessed be the Lord, I am free of that guilt!’

Here the justice interposed, observing, that the man seemed inclined to make a discovery, by turning king’s evidence, and desired the clerk to take his confession; upon which Humphry declared, that he looked upon confession to be a popish fraud, invented by the Whore of Babylon. The Templar affirmed, that the poor fellow was *non compos*; and exhorted the justice to discharge him as a lunatick. ‘You know very well,’ added he, ‘that the robbery in question was not committed by the prisoner.’

The thief-takers grinned at one another; and Mr. Justice Buzzard replied, with great emotion—‘Mr. Martin, I desire you will mind your own business. I shall convince you one of these days that I understand mine.’ In short, there was no remedy; the mittimus was made out, and poor Clinker sent to prison in a hackney-coach, guarded by a constable, and accompanied by your humble servant. By the way, I was not a little surprized to hear this retainer to justice bid the prisoner to keep up his spirits, for that he did not at all doubt but that he would get off for a few weeks confinement. He said, his worship knew very well that Clinker was innocent of the fact; and that the real highwayman, who robbed the chaise, was no other than that very individual Mr. Martin, who had pleaded so strenuously for honest Humphry.

Confounded

Confounded at this information, I asked—‘Why, then, is he suffered to go about at his liberty, and this poor innocent fellow treated as a malefactor?’—‘We have exact intelligence of all Mr. Martin’s transactions,’ said he; ‘but as yet there is no evidence sufficient for his conviction: and as for this young man, the justice could do no less than commit him, as the postilion swore point-blank to his identity.’—‘So if this rascally postilion should persist in the falsity to which he is sworn,’ said I, ‘this innocent lad may be brought to the gallows!’

The constable observed, that he would have time enough to prepare for his trial, and might prove an *alibi*; or, perhaps, Martin might be apprehended and convicted for another fact; in which case, he might be prevailed upon to take this affair upon himself; or, finally, if these chances should fail, and the evidence stand good against Clinker, the jury might recommend him to mercy, in consideration of his youth, especially if this should appear to be the first fact of which he had been guilty.

Humphry owned he could not pretend to recollect where he had been on the day when the robbery was committed, much less prove a circumstance of that kind so far back as six months, though he knew he had been sick of the fever and ague; which, however, did not prevent him from going about. Then, turning up his eyes, he ejaculated ‘The Lord’s will be done! If it be my fate to suffer, I hope I shall not disgrace the faith of which, though unworthy, I make profession!’

When I expressed my surprize, that the accuser should persist in charging Clinker, without taking notice of the real robber, who stood before him, and to whom, indeed, Humphry bore not the smallest resemblance; the constable (who was himself a thief-taker) gave me to understand, that Mr. Martin was the best qualified for business of all the gentlemen on the road he had ever known; that he had

always acted on his own bottom, without partner or correspondent, and never went to work but when he was cool and sober; that his courage and presence of mind never failed him; that his address was genteel, and his behaviour void of all cruelty and insolence; that he never encumbered himself with watches or trinkets, nor even with bank-notes, but always dealt for ready-money, and that in the current coin of the kingdom; and that he could disguise himself and his horse in such a manner, that, after the action, it was impossible to recognize either the one or the other. 'This great man,' said he, 'has reigned paramount in all the roads within fifty miles of London above fifteen months, and has done more business in that time than all the rest of the profession put together; for those who pass through his hands are so delicately dealt with, that they have no desire to give him the least disturbance: but, for all that, his race is almost run; he is now fluttering about justice like a moth about a candle; there are so many lime-twigs laid in his way, that I will bett a cool hundred he swings before Christmas.'

Shall I own to you, that this portrait, drawn by a ruffian, heightened by what I myself had observed in his deportment, has interested me warmly in the fate of poor Martin, whom nature seems to have intended for a useful and honourable member of that community upon which he now preys for subsistence? It seems, he lived some time as a clerk to a timber-merchant, whose daughter Martin having privately married, was discarded, and his wife turned out of doors. She did not long survive her marriage; and Martin, turning fortune-hunter, could not supply his occasions any other way than by taking to the road, in which he has travelled hitherto with uncommon success. He pays his respects regularly to Mr. Justice Buzzard, the thief-catcher-general of this metropolis; and sometimes they
smoke

smoke a pipe together very lovingly, when the conversation generally turns upon the nature of evidence. The justice has given him fair warning to take care of himself, and he has received his caution in good part. Hitherto he has baffled all the vigilance, art, and activity, of Buzzard and his emissaries, with such conduct as would have done honour to the genius of a Cæsar or a Turenne: but he has one weakness, which has proved fatal to all the heroes of the tribe; namely, an indiscreet devotion to the fair-sex; and, in all probability, he will be attacked on this defenceless quarter.

Be that as it may, I saw the body of poor Clinker consigned to the goaler of Clerkenwell, to whose indulgence I recommended him so effectually, that he received him in the most hospitable manner; though there was a necessity for equipping him with a suit of irons, in which he made a very rueful appearance. The poor creature seemed as much affected by my uncle's kindness as by his own misfortune, when I assured him that nothing should be left undone for procuring his enlargement, and making his confinement easy in the mean time: he fell down on his knees, and kissing my hand, which he bathed with his tears—'O squire!' cried he, sobbing, 'what shall I say? I cannot—no—I cannot speak! My poor heart is bursting with gratitude to you and my dear—dear—generous—noble benefactor!'

I protest, the scene became so pathetick, that I was fain to force myself away, and returned to my uncle, who sent me in the afternoon with a compliment to one Mr. Mead, the person who had been robbed on Blackheath. As I did not find him at home, I left a message, in consequence of which he called at our lodgings this morning, and very humanely agreed to visit the prisoner. By this time, Lady Griskin had come to make her formal compliments of condolence to Mrs. Tabitha, on this

domestic calamity ; and that prudent maiden, whose passion was now cooled, thought proper to receive her ladyship so civilly, that a reconciliation immediately ensued. These two ladies resolved to comfort the poor prisoner in their own persons ; and Mr. Mead and I squired them to Clerkenwell, my uncle being detained at home by some slight complaints in his stomach and bowels.

The turnkey, who received us at Clerkenwell, looked remarkably sullen ; and when we enquired for Clinker—‘ I do not care if the devil had him,’ said he : ‘ here has been nothing but canting and praying since the fellow entered the place. Rabbit him ! the tap will be ruined ! We ha’nt sold a cask of beer, nor a dozen of wine, since he paid his garnish : the gentlemen get drunk with nothing but your damned religion ! For my part, I believe as how your man deals with the devil ! Two or three as bold hearts as ever took the air upon Hounslow, have been blubbering all night ; and if the fellow an’t speedily removed by Habeas Corpus, or otherwise, I’ll be damn’d if there’s a grain of true spirit left within these walls ! We sha’nt have a soul to do credit to the place, or make his exit like a true-born Englishman ! D—n my eyes ! there will be nothing but snivelling in the cart : we shall all die like so many psalm-singing weavers !’

In short, we found that Humphry was, at that very instant, haranguing the felons in the chapel, and that the gaoler’s wife and daughter, together with my aunt’s woman, Win. Jenkins, and our house-maid, were among the audience, which we immediately joined. I never saw any thing so strongly picturesque as this congregation of felons clinking their chains, in the midst of whom stood orator Clinker, expatiating, in a transport of fervour, on the torments of hell, denounced in Scripture against evil-doers, comprehending murderers, robbers, thieves, and whoremongers. The variety of
attention

attention exhibited in the faces of those ragamuffins, formed a groupe that would not have disgraced the pencil of a Raphael. In one, it denoted admiration; in another, doubt; in a third, disdain; in a fourth, contempt; in a fifth, terror; in a sixth, derision; and in a seventh, indignation. As for Mrs. Winifred Jenkins, she was in tears, overwhelmed with sorrow; but whether for her own sins, or the misfortune of Clinker, I cannot pretend to say. The other females seemed to listen with a mixture of wonder and devotion. The gaoler's wife declared he was a saint in trouble, saying, she wished from her heart there was such another good soul, like him, in every gaol in England.

Mr. Mead, having earnestly surveyed the preacher, declared his appearance was so different from that of the person who robbed him on Blackheath, that he could freely make oath he was not the man. But Humphry himself was by this time pretty well rid of all apprehensions of being hanged; for he had been the night before solemnly tried and acquitted by his fellow-prisoners, some of whom he had already converted to methodism. He now made proper acknowledgments for the honour of our visit, and was permitted to kiss the hands of the ladies, who assured him he might depend upon their friendship and protection. Lady Grislin, in her great zeal, exhorted his fellow-prisoners to profit by the precious opportunity of having such a saint in bonds among them, and turn over a new leaf for the benefit of their poor souls; and, that her admonition might have the greater effect, she reinforced it with her bounty.

While she and Mrs. Tabby returned in the coach, with the two maid-servants, I waited on Mr. Mead to the house of Justice Buzzard; who, having heard his declaration, said his oath could be of no use at present, but that he would be a material evidence for the prisoner at his trial; so that there seems to

be no remedy but patience for poor Clinker : and, indeed, the same virtue or medicine will be necessary for us all, the squire in particular, who had set his heart upon his excursion to the northward.

While we were visiting honest Humphry in Clerkenwell prison, my uncle received a much more extraordinary visit at his own lodgings. Mr. Martin, of whom I have made such honourable mention, desired permission to pay him his respects, and was admitted accordingly. He told him, that having observed him, at Mr. Buzzard's, a good deal disturbed by what had happened to his servant, he had come to assure him he had nothing to apprehend for Clinker's life ; for, if it was possible that any jury could find him guilty upon such evidence, he, Martin himself, would produce in court a person, whose deposition would bring him off clear as the sun at noon. Sure, the fellow would not be so romantick as to take the robbery upon himself ! He said, the postilion was an infamous fellow, who had been a dabbler in the same profession, and saved his life at the Old Bailey, by impeaching his companions ; that being now reduced to great poverty, he had made this desperate push, to swear away the life of an innocent man, in hopes of having the reward upon his conviction ; but that he would find himself miserably disappointed, for the justice and his myrmidons were determined to admit of no interloper in this branch of business ; and that he did not at all doubt but that they would find matter enough to stop the evidence himself before the next gaol-delivery. He affirmed, that all these circumstances were well known to the justice ; and that his severity to Clinker was no other than a hint to his master to make him a present in private, as an acknowledgment of his candour and humanity.

This hint, however, was so unpalatable to Mr. Bramble, that he declared, with great warmth, he would rather confine himself for life to London,
which

which he detested, than be at liberty to leave it to-morrow, in consequence of encouraging corruption in a magistrate. Hearing, however, how favourable Mr. Mead's report had been for the prisoner, he is resolved to take the advice of counsel in what manner to proceed for his immediate enlargement. I make no doubt, but that in a day or two this troublesome business may be discussed; and in this hope we are preparing for our journey. If our endeavours do not miscarry, we shall have taken the field before you hear again from your's,

London, June 11.

J. Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

THANK Heaven, dear Lewis, the clouds are dispersed, and I have now the clearest prospect of my summer campaign, which, I hope, I shall be able to begin to-morrow. I took the advice of counsel with respect to the case of Clinker, in whose favour a lucky accident has intervened. The fellow who accused him has had his own battery turned upon himself. Two days ago he was apprehended for a robbery on the highway, and committed on the evidence of an accomplice. Clinker, having moved for a writ of *habeas corpus*, was brought before the lord chief justice, who, in consequence of an affidavit of the gentleman who had been robbed, importing that the said Clinker was not the person who stopped him on the highway, as well as in consideration of the postilion's character and present circumstances, was pleased to order that my servant should be admitted to bail, and he has been discharged accordingly, to the unspeakable satisfaction of our whole family, to which he has recommended himself in an extraordinary manner, not only by his obliging deportment, but by his talents of preaching, praying, and singing psalms; which he has exercised with such effect, that even Tabby respects him

him as a chosen vessel. If there was any thing like affectation or hypocrisy in this excess of religion, I would not keep him in my service; but, so far as I can observe, the fellow's character is downright simplicity, warmed with a kind of enthusiasm, which renders him very susceptible of gratitude and attachment to his benefactors.

As he is an excellent horseman, and understands farriery, I have bought a stout gelding for his use, that he may attend us on the road, and have an eye to our cattle, in case the coachman should not mind his business. My nephew, who is to ride his own saddle-horse, has taken upon trial a servant just come from abroad with his former master, Sir William Strollop, who vouches for his honesty. The fellow, whose name is Dutton, seems to be a petit-maitre. He has got a smattering of French, bows, and grins, and shrugs, and takes snuff *a la mode de France*; but values himself chiefly upon his skill and dexterity in hair-dressing. If I am not much deceived by appearance, he is in all respects the very contrast of Humphry Clinker.

My sister has made up matters with Lady Griskin; though I must own I should not have been sorry to see that connection entirely destroyed; but Tabby is not of a disposition to forgive Barton; who, I understand, is gone to his seat in Berkshire for the summer season. I cannot help suspecting, that, in the treaty of peace which has been lately ratified betwixt those two females, it is stipulated that her ladyship shall use her best endeavours to provide an agreeable helpmate for our sister Tabitha, who seems to be quite desperate in her matrimonial designs. Perhaps the match-maker is to have a valuable consideration in the way of brokerage, which she will most certainly deserve, if she can find any man in his senses who will yoke with Mrs. Bramble from motives of affection or interest. I find

I find my spirits and my health affect each other reciprocally; that is to say, every thing that discomposes my mind, produces a correspondent disorder in my body; and my bodily complaints are remarkably mitigated by those considerations that dissipate the clouds of mental chagrin. The imprisonment of Clinker brought on those symptoms which I mentioned in my last, and now they are vanished at his discharge. It must be owned, indeed, I took some of the tincture of ginseng, prepared according to your prescription, and found it exceedingly grateful to the stomach; but the pain and sickness continued to return, after short intervals, till the anxiety of my mind was entirely removed, and then I found myself perfectly at ease. We have had fair weather these ten days, to the astonishment of the Londoners, who think it portentous. If you enjoy the same indulgence in Wales, I hope Barnes has got my hay made, and safe cocked, by this time. As we shall be in motion for some weeks, I cannot expect to hear from you as usual; but I shall continue to write from every place at which we make any halt, that you may know our track, in case it should be necessary to communicate any thing to your assured friend,

London, June 14.

Matt. Bramble.

To Mrs. Mary Jones, at Brambleton-Hall.

Dear Mary,

HAVING the occasion of my cousin Jenkins, of Abergarny, I send you, as a token, a turkey-shell comb, a kiple of yards of green ribbon, and a sermon upon the nothingness of good works, which was preached in the Tabernacle; and you will also receive a horn-buck for Saul, whereby she may learn her letters; for I'm much concerned about the state of her poor sole: and what are all the pursuits of this life to the concerns of that immortal part? What is life but a veil of affliction? O Mary! the whole

whole family have been in such a constipation! Mr. Clinker has been in trouble, but the gates of hell have not been able to prevail against him. His virtue is like poor goul, seven times tried in the fire. He was tuck up for a robbery, and had before gustafs Busshard, who made his mittamouse; and the pore youth was sent to prison upon the false oaf of a willain, that wanted to sware his life away for the looker of cain.

The squire did all in his power, but could not prevent his being put in chains, and confined among common manufactors, where he stud like an innocent sheep in the midst of wolves and tigers. Lord knows what mought have happened to this pyehouse young man, if master had not applied to Apias-Korkus, who lives with the ould bailiff, and is, they say, five hundred years ould, (God blefs us!) and a congeror: but if he be, sure I am he don't deal with the devil, otherwise he woudn't have fought out Mr. Clinker as he did, in spite of stone walls, iron bolts, and double locks, that flew open at his command; for ould Scratch has not a greater enemy upon hearth than Mr. Clinker, who is, indeed, a very powerful labourer in the Lord's vineyard. I do no more than yuse the words of my good lady, who has got the ineffectual calling; and, I trust, that even myself, though unworthy, shall find greafe to be excepted. Miss Liddy has been touched to the quick, but is a little timorsome: howsomever, I make no doubt, but she, and all of us, will be brought, by the endeavours of Mr. Clinker, to produce blessed fruit of generation and repentance. As for master and the young squire, they have as yet had narro glimpse of the new light. I doubt as how their harts are hardened by worldly wisdom, which, as the pyebill saith, is foolishness in the sight of God.

O Mary Jones! pray without seizing for greafe to prepare you for the operations of this wonderful instrument,

instrument, which, I hope, will be exorcised this winter upon you and others at Brambleton Hall. To-morrow we are to set out in a cox and four for Yorkshire; and, I believe, we shall travel that way far, and far, and farther than I can tell: but I shan't go so far as to forget my friends; and Mary Jones will always be remembered as one of them by her humble servant,

London, June 14.

Win. Jenkins.

To Mrs. Gwyllim, Housekeeper at Brambleton Hall.

Mrs. Gwyllim,

I CAN'T help thinking it very strange that I never had an answer to the letter I wrote you some weeks ago from Bath, concerning the four bear, the gander, and the maids eating butter, which I won't allow to be wasted. We are now going upon a long gurney to the north, whereby I desire you will redouble your care and circumflexion, that the family may be well managed in our absence; for you know you must render account, not only to your earthly master, but also to him that is above; and if you are found a good and faithful servant, great will be your reward in haven. I hope there will be twenty ston of cheese ready for market by the time I get home, and as much owl spun as will make half a dozen pair of blankets; and that the savings of the butter-milk will fetch me a good penny before Martinmas, as the two pigs are to be fed for baking with birch-mast and acrons.

I wrote to Doctor Lewis for the same purposes, but he never had the good manners to take the least notice of my letter; for which reason I shall never favour him with another, though he besuits me on his bended knees. You will do well to keep a watchful eye over the hind Villiams, who is one of his amissories, and, I believe, no better than he should be at bottom. God forbid that I should lack Christian charity; but charity begins at home; and
 sure

sure nothing can be a more charitable work than to rid the family of such vermine. I do suppose that the brindled cow has been had to the parson's bull, that old Moll has had another litter of pigs, and that Dick has become a mighty mouser. Pray order every thing for the best, and be frugal, and keep the maids to their labour. If I had a private opportunity, I would send them some hymns to sing instead of prophane ballads; but, as I can't, they and you must be contented with the prayers of your assured friend,

London, June 14.

T. Bramble.

To Sir Watkin Phillips, Bart. of Jesus College, Oxon.

Dear Phillips,

THE very day after I wrote my last, Clinker was set at liberty. As Martin had foretold, the accuser was himself committed for a robbery upon unquestionable evidence. He had been for some time in the snares of the thief-taking society; who, resenting his presumption in attempting to encroach upon their monopoly of impeachment, had him taken up and committed to Newgate, on the deposition of an accomplice, who has been admitted as evidence for the king. The postilion being upon record as an old offender, the chief justice made no scruple of admitting Clinker to bail, when he perused the affidavit of Mr. Mead, importing that the said Clinker was not the person who robbed him on Blackheath; and honest Humphry was discharged. When he came home, he expressed great eagerness to pay his respects to his master; and here his elocution failed him, but his silence was pathetick: he fell down at his feet, and embraced his knees, shedding a flood of tears, which my uncle did not see without emotion. He took snuff in some confusion; and, putting his hand in his pocket, gave him his blessing in something more substantial than words. 'Clinker,' said he, 'I am so well convinced, both of your honesty

nefty and courage, that I am resolved to make you my life-guardman on the highway.'

He was accordingly provided with a case of pistols, and a carbine to be slung across his shoulders; and every other preparation being made, we set out last Thursday, at seven in the morning; my uncle, with the three women, in the coach; Humphry well mounted on a black gelding bought for his use; Mr. Dutton, an exceeding coxcomb, fresh from his travels, whom I have taken upon trial. The fellow wears a solitaire, uses paint, and takes rappee with all the grimace of a French marquis. At present, however, he is in a riding-dress, jack-boots, leather breeches, a scarlet waistcoat, with gold binding, a laced hat, a hanger, a French posting-whip in his hand, and his hair *en queue*.

Before we had gone nine miles, my horse lost one of his shoes; so that I was obliged to stop at Barnet to have another, while the coach proceeded at an easy pace over the common. About a mile short of Hatfield, the postilion, stopping the carriage, gave notice to Clinker that there were two suspicious fellows on horseback at the end of a lane, who seemed waiting to attack the coach. Humphry forthwith apprized my uncle, declaring he would stand by him to the last drop of his blood; and, unslinging his carbine, prepared for action. The squire had pistols in the pockets of the coach, and resolved to make use of them directly; but he was effectually prevented by his female companions, who flung themselves about his neck, and screamed in concert. At that instant, who should come up at a hand-gallop but Martin the highwayman; who advancing to the coach, begged the ladies would compose themselves for a moment; then desiring Clinker to follow him to the charge, he pulled a pistol out of his bosom, and they rode up together to give battle to the rogues; who, having fired at a great distance, fled

across the common. They were in pursuit of the fugitives when I came up, not a little alarmed at the shrieks in the coach, where I found my uncle in a violent rage, without his periwig, struggling to disentangle himself from Tabby and the other two, and swearing with great vociferation. Before I had time to interpose, Martin and Clinker returned from the pursuit; and the former paid his compliments with great politeness, giving us to understand, that the fellows had scampered off, and that he believed they were a couple of raw 'prentices from London. He commended Clinker for his courage, and said, if we would give him leave, he would have the honour to accompany us as far as Stevenage, where he had some business.

The squire, having recollected and adjusted himself, was the first to laugh at his own situation; but it was not without difficulty that Tabby's arms could be untwisted from his neck, Liddy's teeth chattered, and Jenkins was threatened with a fit, as usual. I had communicated to my uncle the character of Martin, as it was described by the constable, and he was much struck with it's singularity. He could not suppose the fellow had any design on our company, which was so numerous and well armed; he therefore thanked him for the service he had just done them, said he would be glad of his company, and asked him to dine with us at Hatfield. This invitation might not have been agreeable to the ladies, had they known the real profession of our guest; but this was a secret to all, except my uncle and myself. Mrs. Tabitha, however, would by no means consent to proceed with a case of loaded pistols in the coach, and they were forthwith discharged, in complaisance to her and the rest of the women.

Being gratified in this particular, she became remarkably good-humoured, and at dinner behaved in the most affable manner to Mr. Martin, with whose polite address and agreeable conversation she
seemed

seemed to be much taken. After dinner, the landlord, accosting me in the yard, asked, with a significant look, if the gentleman that rode the sorrel belonged to our company. I understood his meaning, but answered—‘No;’ that he had come up with us on the common, and helped us to drive away two fellows that looked like highwaymen. He nodded three times distinctly, as much as to say, He knows his cue. Then he enquired if one of those men was mounted on a bay mare, and the other on a chestnut gelding, with a white streak down his forehead; and being answered in the affirmative, he assured me they had robbed three post-chaises that very morning. I enquired, in my turn, if Mr. Martin was of his acquaintance; and, nodding thrice again, he answered, *that he had seen the gentleman.*

Before we left Hatfield, my uncle, fixing his eyes on Martin with such expression as is more easily conceived than described, asked if he often travelled that road; and he replied with a look which denoted his understanding the question, that he very seldom did business in that part of the country. In a word, this adventurer favoured us with his company to the neighbourhood of Stevenage, where he took his leave of the coach and me in very polite terms, and turned off upon a cross road, that led to a village on the left. At supper, Mrs. Tabby was very full in the praise of Mr. Martin’s good sense and good breeding, and seemed to regret that she had not a farther opportunity to make some experiment upon his affection. In the morning my uncle was not a little surprised to receive from the waiter a billet couched in these words.

‘ Sir,

‘ I COULD easily perceive, from your looks, when I had the honour to converse with you at Hatfield, that my character is not unknown to you; and, I dare say, you will not think it strange that I should

be glad to change my present way of life for any other honest occupation, let it be ever so humble, that will afford me bread in moderation, and sleep in safety. Perhaps you may think I flatter, when I say, that, from the moment I was witness to your generous concern in the cause of your servant, I conceived a particular esteem and veneration for your person; and yet what I say is true. I should think myself happy if I could be admitted into your protection and service, as house-steward, clerk, butler, or bailiff; for either of which places I think myself tolerably well qualified: and sure I am, I should not be found deficient in gratitude and fidelity. At the same time, I am very sensible how much you must deviate from the common maxims of discretion, even in putting my professions to the trial: but I do not look upon you as a person that thinks in the ordinary style; and the delicacy of my situation will, I know, justify this address to a heart warmed with beneficence and compassion. Understanding you are going pretty far north, I shall take an opportunity to throw myself in your way again before you reach the borders of Scotland; and I hope, by that time, you will have taken into consideration the truly distressful case of, honoured

Sir, your very humble and devoted servant,

‘ Edward Martin.’

The squire having perused this letter, put it into my hand without saying a syllable: and when I had read it, we looked at each other in silence. From a certain sparkling in his eyes, I discovered there was more in his heart than he cared to express with his tongue in favour of poor Martin; and this was precisely my own feeling, which he did not fail to discern by the same means of communication. ‘What shall we do,’ said he, ‘to save this poor sinner from the gallows, and make him a useful member of the commonwealth? And yet the proverb

says—

says—"Save a thief from the gallows, and he will cut your throat." I told him I really believed Martin was capable of giving the proverb the lye, and that I should heartily concur in any step he might take in favour of his solicitation. We mutually resolved to deliberate upon the subject, and, in the mean time, proceeded on our journey. The roads having been broke up by the heavy rains in the spring, were so rough, that, although we travelled very slowly, the jolting occasioned such pain to my uncle, that he was become exceedingly peevish when we arrived at this place, which lies about eight miles from the post-road, between Weatherby and Boroughbridge.

Harrowgate-water, so celebrated for its efficacy in the scurvy and other distempers, is supplied from a copious spring in the hollow of a wild common, round which a good many houses have been built for the convenience of the drinkers, though few of them are inhabited. Most of the company lodge at some distance, in five separate inns, situated in different parts of the common, from whence they go every morning to the well in their own carriages. The lodgers of each inn form a distinct society, that eat together; and there is a commodious publick room, where they breakfast in dishabille, at separate tables, from eight o'clock till eleven, as they chance or chuse to come in. Here also they drink tea in the afternoon, and play at cards, or dance in the evening. One custom, however, prevails, which I look upon as a solecism in politeness. The ladies treat with tea in their turns; and even girls of sixteen are not exempted from this shameful imposition. There is a public ball by subscription every night at one of the houses, to which all the company from the others are admitted by tickets: and, indeed, Harrowgate treads upon the heels of Bath, in the articles of gaiety and dissipation; with this difference, however, that here we are more sociable

and familiar. One of the inns is already full up to the very garrets, having no less than fifty lodgers, and as many servants. Our family does not exceed thirty-six; and I should be sorry to see the number augmented, as our accommodations will not admit of much increase.

At present the company is more agreeable than one could expect from an accidental assemblage of persons who are utter strangers to one another. There seems to be a general disposition among us to maintain good fellowship, and promote the purposes of humanity, in favour of those who come hither on the score of health. I see several faces which we left at Bath; although the majority are of the northern counties, and many come from Scotland for the benefit of these waters. In such a variety there must be some originals, among whom Mrs. Tabitha Bramble is not the most inconsiderable. No place, where there is such an intercourse between the sexes, can be disagreeable to a lady of her views and temperament. She has had some warm disputes at table with a lame parson from Northumberland, on the new birth, and the insignificance of moral virtue; and her arguments have been reinforced by an old Scotch lawyer, in a tye-periwig; who, though he has lost his teeth, and the use of his limbs, can still wag his tongue with great volubility. He has paid her such fulsome compliments upon her piety and learning, as seem to have won her heart; and she, in her turn, treats him with such attention, as indicates a design upon his person; but, by all accounts, he is too much a fox to be inveigled into any snare that she can lay for his affection.

We do not propose to stay long at Harrowgate, though at present it is our head-quarters; from whence we shall make some excursions to visit two or three of our rich relations, who are settled in this county. Pray remember me to all our friends
of

of Jesus, and allow me to be still your's affectionately,

Harrigate, June 23.

J. Melford.

To Dr. Lewis.

Dear Doctor,

CONSIDERING the tax we pay for turnpikes, the roads of this country constitute a most intolerable grievance. Between Newark and Weatherby, I have suffered more from jolting and swinging than ever I felt in the whole course of my life, although the carriage is remarkably commodious and well hung, and the postilions were very careful in driving. I am now safely housed at the New Inn, at Harrigate, whither I came to satisfy my curiosity, rather than with any view of advantage to my health; and truly, after having considered all the parts and particulars of the place, I cannot account for the concourse of people one finds here, upon any other principle but that of caprice, which seems to be the character of our nation.

Harrigate is a wild common, bare and bleak, without tree or shrub, or the least signs of cultivation; and the people, who come to drink the water, are crowded together in paltry inns, where the few tolerable rooms are monopolized by the friends and favourites of the house, and all the rest of the lodgers are obliged to put up with dirty holes, where there is neither space, air, nor convenience. My apartment is about ten feet square; and when the folding-bed is down, there is just room sufficient to pass between it and the fire. One might expect, indeed, that there would be no occasion for a fire at Midsummer; but here the climate is so backward, that an ash-tree, which our landlord has planted before my window, is just beginning to put forth its leaves; and I am fain to have my bed warmed ever night.

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As for the water, which is said to have effected so many surprizing cures, I have drank it once, and the first draught has cured me of all desire to repeat the medicine. Some people say it smells of rotten eggs, and others compare it to the scourings of a foul gun. It is generally supposed to be strongly impregnated with sulphur; and Dr. Shaw, in his book upon mineral waters, says, he has seen flakes of sulphur floating in the well—*Pace tanti viri*; I, for my part, have never observed any thing like sulphur, either in or about the well; neither do I find that any brimstone has ever been extracted from the water. As for the smell, if I may be allowed to judge from my own organs, it is exactly that of bilge-water; and the saline taste of it seems to declare that it is nothing else than salt water putrified in the bowels of the earth. I was obliged to hold my nose with one hand, while I advanced the glass to my mouth with the other; and after I had made shift to swallow it, my stomach could hardly retain what it had received. The only effects it produced were sickness, griping, and insurmountable disgust. I can hardly mention it without puking. The world is strangely misled by the affectation of singularity. I cannot help suspecting that this water owes its reputation in a great measure to its being so strikingly offensive. On the same kind of analogy, a German doctor has introduced hemlock, and other poisons, as specificks, into the *materia medica*. I am persuaded that all the cures ascribed to the Harrogate water, would have been as efficaciously, and infinitely more agreeably, performed, by the internal and external use of sea-water. Sure I am, this last is much less nauseous to the taste and smell, and much more gentle in its operation as a purge, as well as more extensive in its medical qualities.

Two days ago, we went across the country to visit Squire Burdock, who married a first cousin of my father, an heiress, who brought him an estate of

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of a thousand a year. This gentleman is a declared opponent of the ministry in parliament; and having an opulent fortune, piques himself upon living in the country, and maintaining *old English hospitality*. By the bye, this is a phrase very much used by the English themselves, both in words and writing; but I never heard of it out of the island, except by way of irony and sarcasm. What the hospitality of our forefathers has been I should be glad to see recorded, rather in the memoirs of strangers who have visited our country, and were the proper objects and judges of such hospitality, than in the discourse and lucubrations of the modern English, who seem to describe it from theory and conjecture. Certain it is, we are generally looked upon by foreigners as a people totally destitute of this virtue; and I never was in any country abroad where I did not meet with persons of distinction, who complained of having been inhospitably used in Great Britain. A gentleman of France, Italy, or Germany, who has entertained and lodged an Englishman at his house, when he afterwards meets with his guest at London, is asked to dinner at the Saracen's Head, the Turk's Head, the Boar's Head, or the Bear, eats raw beef and butter, drinks execrable port, and is allowed to pay his share of the reckoning.

But to return from this digression, which my feeling for the honour of my country obliged me to make. Our Yorkshire cousin has been a mighty fox-hunter *before the lord*; but now he is too fat and unwieldy to leap ditches and five-bar gates; nevertheless, he still keeps a pack of hounds, which are well exercised; and his huntsman every night entertains him with the adventures of the day's chase, which he recites in a tone and terms that are extremely curious and significant. In the mean time, his broad brawn is scratched by one of his grooms. This fellow, it seems, having no inclination to curry any beast out of the stable, was at great pains

to scollop his nails in such a manner that the blood followed at every stroke. He was in hopes that he would be dismissed from this disagreeable office, but the event turned out contrary to his expectation. His master declared he was the best scratcher in the family; and now he will not suffer any other servant to draw a nail upon his carcase.

This squire's lady is very proud, without being stiff or inaccessible. She receives even her inferiors in point of fortune with a kind of arrogant civility; but then she thinks she has a right to treat them with the most ungracious freedoms of speech, and never fails to let them know she is sensible of her own superior affluence. In a word, she speaks well of no living soul, and has not one single friend in the world. Her husband hates her mortally; but although the brute is sometimes so very powerful in him that he will have his own way, he generally truckles to her dominion, and dreads, like a school-boy, the lash of her tongue. On the other hand, she is afraid of provoking him too far, lest he should make some desperate effort to shake off her yoke. She, therefore, acquiesces in the proofs he daily gives of his attachment to the liberty of an English freeholder, by saying, and doing, at his own table, whatever gratifies the brutality of his disposition, or contributes to the ease of his person. The house, though large, is neither elegant nor comfortable. It looks like a great inn, crowded with travellers, who dine at the landlord's ordinary, where there is a great profusion of victuals and drink, but mine host seems to be misplaced; and I would rather dine upon filberts with a hermit, than feed upon venison with a hog. The footmen might be aptly compared to the waiters of a tavern, if they were more serviceable, and less rapacious; but they are generally insolent and inattentive, and so greedy, that, I think, I can dine better, and for less expence, at the Star and Garter in Pall Mall, than

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at our cousin's castle in Yorkshire. The squire is not only accommodated with a wife, but he is also blessed with an only son, about two and twenty, just returned from Italy, a compleat fiddler and *diletante*; and he slips no opportunity of manifesting the most perfect contempt for his own father.

When we arrived, there was a family of foreigners at the house, on a visit to this virtuoso, with whom they had been acquainted at the Spa; it was the Count De Melville, with his lady, on their way to Scotland. Mr. Burdock had met with an accident, in consequence of which both the count and I would have retired, but the young gentleman and his mother insisted upon our staying dinner; and their serenity seemed to be so little ruffled by what had happened, that we complied with their invitation. The squire had been brought home over night in his post chaise, so terribly belaboured about the pate, that he seemed to be in a state of stupefaction, and had ever since remained speechless. A country apothecary, called Grieve, who lived in a neighbouring village, having been called to his assistance, had let him blood, and applied a poultice to his head, declaring, that he had no fever, nor any other bad symptom but the loss of speech, if he really had lost that faculty. But the young squire said this practitioner was an *ignorantaccio*, that there was a fracture in the *cranium*, and that there was a necessity for having him trepanned without loss of time. His mother, espousing this opinion, had sent an express to York for a surgeon to perform the operation, and he was already come with his apprentice and instruments. Having examined the patient's head, he began to prepare his dressings; though Grieve still retained his first opinion that there was no fracture, and was the more confirmed in it, as the squire had passed the night in profound sleep, uninterrupted by any catching or convulsion. The York surgeon said he could
not

not tell whether there was a fracture, until he should take off the scalp; but, at any rate, the operation might be of service in giving vent to any blood that might be extravasated, either above or below the *dura mater*. The lady and her son were clear for trying the experiment; and Grieve was dismissed with some marks of contempt, which, perhaps, he owed to the plainness of his appearance. He seemed to be about the middle age, wore his own black hair, without any sort of dressing; by his garb, one would have taken him for a quaker, but he had none of the stiffness of that sect; on the contrary, he was very submissive, respectful, and remarkably taciturn.

Leaving the ladies in an apartment by themselves, we adjourned to the patient's chamber, where the dressings and instruments were displayed in order upon a pewter dish. The operator, laying aside his coat and periwig, equipped himself with a night-cap, apron, and sleeves, while his apprentice and footman, seizing the squire's head, began to place it in a proper posture. But mark what followed: the patient, bolting upright in the bed, collared each of these assistants with the grasp of Hercules, exclaiming in a bellowing tone—'I ha'n't lived so long in Yorkshire to be trepanned by such vermin as you!' and, leaping on the floor, put on his breeches quietly, to the astonishment of us all. The surgeon still insisted upon the operation, alledging, it was now plain that the brain was injured, and desired the servants to put him into bed again; but nobody would venture to execute his orders, or even to interpose; when the squire turned him and his assistants out of doors, and threw his apparatus out at the window. Having thus asserted his prerogative, and put on his cloaths with the help of a valet, the count, with my nephew and me, were introduced by his son, and received with his usual style of rustick civility; then turning to Signor Macaroni,





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Macaroni, with a sarcastick grin—‘ I tell thee what, Dick,’ said he, ‘ a man’s skull is not to be bored every time his head is broken ; and I’ll convince thee and thy mother, that I know as many tricks as e’er an old fox in the West Riding.’

We afterwards understood he had quarrelled at a public-house with an exciseman, whom he challenged to a bout at single stick, in which he had been worsted ; and that the shame of this defeat had tied up his tongue. As for madam, she had shewn no concern for his disaster, and now heard of his recovery without emotion. She had taken some little notice of my sister and niece, though rather with a view to indulge her own petulance, than out of any sentiment of regard to our family. She said Liddy was a fright, and ordered her woman to adjust her head before dinner ; but she would not meddle with Tabby, whose spirit, she soon perceived, was not to be irritated with impunity. At table, she acknowledged me so far as to say she had heard of my father ; though she hinted, that he had disoblighed her family by making a poor match in Wales. She was disagreeably familiar in her enquiries about our circumstances ; and asked if I intended to bring up my nephew to the law. I told her, that, as he had an independent fortune, he should follow no profession but that of a country gentleman ; and that I was not without hopes of procuring for him a seat in parliament. ‘ Pray, cousin,’ said she, ‘ what may his fortune be ?’ When I answered, that, with what I should be able to give him, he would have better than two thousand a year, she replied, with a disdainful toss of her head, that it would be impossible for him to preserve his independence on such a paltry provision.

Not a little nettled at this arrogant remark, I told her, I had the honour to sit in parliament with her father, when he had little more than half that income ; and I believed there was not a more inde-

pendent and incorruptible member in the house. 'Ay; but times are changed,' cried the squire. 'Country gentlemen now a days live after another fashion. My table alone stands me in a cool thousand a quarter, though I raise my own stock, import my own liquors, and have every thing at the first hand. True it is, I keep open house, and receive all comers, for the honour of Old England.' — 'If that be the case,' said I, 'it is a wonder you can maintain it at so small an expence; but every private gentleman is not expected to keep a *caravanfera* for the accommodation of travellers; indeed, if every individual lived in the same style, you would not have such a number of guests at your table, of consequence your hospitality would not shine so bright for the glory of the West Riding.' The young squire, tickled by this ironical observation, exclaimed—'*O che burla!*' His mother eyed me in silence with a supercilious air; and the father of the feast, taking a bumper of October—'My service to you, cousin Bramble,' said he: 'I have always heard, there was something keen and biting in the air of the Welch mountains.'

I was much pleased with the Count de Melville, who is sensible, easy, and polite; and the countess is the most amiable woman I ever beheld. In the afternoon they took leave of their entertainers; and the young gentleman, mounting his horse, undertook to conduct their coach through the park, while one of their servants rode round to give notice to the rest, whom they had left at the public-house on the road. The moment their backs were turned, the censorious dæmon took possession of our Yorkshire landlady and our sister Tabitha. The former observed, that the countess was a good sort of a body, but totally ignorant of good breeding, consequently awkward in her address. The squire said he did not pretend to the breeding of any thing but colts; but that the jade would be very handsome if

if she was a little more in flesh. 'Handsome!' cried Tabby? 'she has, indeed, a pair of black eyes without any meaning; but then there is not a good feature in her face.'—'I know not what you call good features in Wales,' replied our landlord; 'but they'll pass in Yorkshire.' Then turning to Liddy, he added—'What say you, my pretty Redfreak?' 'What is your opinion of the countess?'—'I think,' cried Liddy, with great emotion, 'she is an angel.' Tabby chid her for talking with such freedom in company; and the lady of the house said, in a contemptuous tone, she supposed Miss had been brought up at some country boarding-school.

Our conversation was suddenly interrupted by the young gentleman, who galloped into the yard all aghast, exclaiming, that the coach was attacked by a great number of highwaymen. My nephew and I rushing out, found his own and his servant's horse ready-saddled in the stable, with pistols in the caps. We mounted instantly, ordering Clinker and Dutton to follow with all possible expedition; but, notwithstanding all the speed we could make, the action was over before we arrived, and the count, with his lady, safe lodged at the house of Grieve, who had signalized himself in a very remarkable manner on this occasion. At the turning of a lane, that led to the village where the count's servants remained, a couple of robbers on horseback suddenly appeared, with their pistols advanced: one kept the coachman in awe, and the other demanded the count's money, while the young squire went off at full speed, without ever casting a look behind. The count desiring the thief to withdraw his pistol, as the lady was in great terror, delivered his purse, without making the least resistance; but, not satisfied with this booty, which was pretty considerable, the rascal insisted upon rifling her of her ear-rings and neck-lace, and the countess screamed with affliction. Her husband, exasperated at the violence

with which she was threatened, wrested the pistol out of the fellow's hand, and turning it upon him, snapped it in his face; but the robber knowing there was no charge in it, drew another from his bosom; and in all probability would have killed him on the spot, had not his life been saved by a wonderful interposition. Grieve, the apothecary, chancing to pass that very instant, ran up to the coach, and with a crab-stick, which was the only weapon he had, brought the fellow to the ground with the first blow; then seizing his pistol, presented it to his colleague, who fired his piece at random, and fled without farther opposition. The other was secured by the assistance of the count and the coachman; and his legs being tied under the belly of his own horse, Grieve conducted him to the village, whither also the carriage proceeded. It was with great difficulty the countess could be kept from swooning; but at last she was happily conveyed to the house of the apothecary, who went into the shop to prepare some drops for her, while his wife and daughter administered to her in another apartment.

I found the count standing in the kitchen with the parson of the parish, and expressing much impatience to see his protector, whom as yet he had scarce found time to thank for the essential service he had done him and the countess. The daughter passing at the same time with a glass of water, Monsieur de Melville could not help taking notice of her figure, which was strikingly engaging. 'Ay,' said the parson, 'she is the prettiest girl, and the best girl in all my parish; and if I could give my son an estate of ten thousand a year, he should have my consent to lay it at her feet. If Mr. Grieve had been as solicitous about getting money, as he has been in performing all the duties of a primitive Christian, Fy would not have hung so long upon his hands.'—'What is her name?' said I. Sixteen years

years ago,' answered the vicar, 'I christened her by the names of Seraphina Melvilia.'—

'Ha!—What!—How!' cried the count eagerly; 'sure, you said Seraphina Melvilia.'—'I did,' said he. 'Mr. Grieve told me those were the names of two noble persons abroad, to whom he had been obliged for more than life.'

The count, without speaking another syllable, rushed into the parlour, crying—'This is your god-daughter, my dear.' Mrs. Grieve then seizing the countess by the hand, exclaimed with great agitation—'O Madam!—O Sir!—I am—I am your poor Elinor. This is my Seraphina Melvilia. O child! these are the count and countess of Melville, the generous, the glorious benefactors of thy once unhappy parents.'

The countess rising from her seat, threw her arms about the neck of the amiable Seraphina, and clasped her to her breast with great tenderness, while she herself was embraced by the weeping mother. This moving scene was completed by the entrance of Grieve himself, who falling on his knees before the count—'Behold,' said he, 'a penitent, who at length can look upon his patron without shrinking.'—'Ah! Ferdinand!' cried he, raising and folding him in his arms, 'the play-fellow of my infancy—the companion of my youth! Is it to you then I am indebted for my life?'—'Heaven has heard my prayers,' said the other, 'and given me an opportunity to prove myself not altogether unworthy of your clemency and protection.' He then kissed the hand of the countess, while Monsieur de Melville saluted his wife and lovely daughter; and all of us were greatly affected by this pathetick recognition.

In a word, Grieve was no other than Ferdinand Count Fathom, whose adventures were printed many years ago. Being a sincere convert to virtue, he had changed his name, that he might elude the enquiries of the count, whose generous allowance

ance he determined to forego, that he might have no dependence but upon his own industry and moderation. He had accordingly settled in this village as a practitioner in surgery and physick, and for some years wrestled with all the miseries of indigence, which, however, he and his wife had borne with the most exemplary resignation. At length, by dint of unwearied attention to the duties of his profession, which he exercised with equal humanity and success, he had acquired a tolerable share of business among the farmers and common people, which enabled him to live in a decent manner. He had been scarce ever seen to smile; was unaffectedly pious; and all the time he could spare from the avocations of his employment, he spent in educating his daughter, and in studying for his own improvement. In short, the adventurer Fathom was, under the name of Grieve, universally respected among the commonalty of this district, as a prodigy of learning and virtue. These particulars I learned from the vicar, when he quitted the room, that they might be under no restraint in their mutual effusions. I make no doubt that Grieve will be pressed to leave off business, and re-unite himself to the count's family; and as the countess seemed extremely fond of his daughter, she will, in all probability, insist upon Seraphina's accompanying her to Scotland.

Having paid our compliments to these noble persons, we returned to the squire's, where we expected an invitation to pass the night, which was wet and raw; but, it seems, Squire Burdock's hospitality reached not so far for the honour of Yorkshire: we therefore departed in the evening, and lay at an inn, where I caught cold.

In hope of riding it down before it could take fast hold of my constitution, I resolved to visit our other relation, one Mr. Pimpernel, who lived about a dozen miles from the place where we lodged. Pimpernel being the youngest of four sons, was bred
up

an attorney at Furnival's Inn ; but all his elder brothers dying, he got himself called to the bar for the honour of his family ; and soon after this preferment, succeeded to his father's estate, which was very considerable. He carried home with him all the knavish chicanery of the lowest pettifogger, together with a wife whom he had purchased of a drayman for twenty pounds ; and he soon found means to obtain a *Dedimus* as an acting justice of peace. He is not only a sordid miser in his disposition, but his avarice is mingled with a spirit of despotism which is truly diabolical. He is a brutal husband, an unnatural parent, a harsh master, an oppressive landlord, a litigious neighbour, and a partial magistrate. Friends he has none ; and in point of hospitality and good-breeding, our cousin Burdock is a prince in comparison of this ungracious miscreant, whose house is the lively representation of a gaol. Our reception was suitable to the character I have sketched. Had it depended upon the wife, we should have been kindly treated. She is really a good sort of a woman, in spite of her low original, and well respected in the county ; but she has not interest enough in her own house to command a draught of table-beer, far less to bestow any kind of education on her children, who run about, like ragged colts, in a state of nature. Pox on him ! he is such a dirty fellow, that I have not patience to prosecute the subject.

By that time we reached Harrowgate, I began to be visited by certain rheumatick symptoms. The Scotch lawyer, Mr. Micklewhimmen, recommended a hot bath of these waters so earnestly, that I was over-persuaded to try the experiment. He had used it often with success, and always staid an hour in the bath, which was a tub filled with Harrowgate water, heated for the purpose. If I could hardly bear the smell of a single tumbler when cold, you may guess how my nose was regaled by the steams arising from a hot bath of the same fluid. At night

I was conducted into a dark hole on the ground-floor, where the tub smoked and stunk like the pot of Acheron, in one corner ; and in another stood a dirty bed provided with thick blankets, in which I was to sweat after coming out of the bath. My heart seemed to die within me when I entered this dismal bagnio, and found my brain assaulted by such insufferable effluvia. I cursed Micklewhim-men for not considering that my organs were formed on this side of the Tweed ; but being ashamed to recoil upon the threshold, I submitted to the process.

After having endured all but real suffocation for above a quarter of an hour in the tub, I was moved to the bed, and wrapped in blankets. There I lay a full hour panting with intolerable heat ; but not the least moisture appearing on my skin, I was carried to my own chamber, and passed the night without closing an eye, in such a flutter of spirits as rendered me the most miserable wretch in being. I should certainly have run distracted, if the rarefaction of my blood, occasioned by that Stygian bath, had not burst the vessels, and produced a violent hæmorrhage, which, though dreadful and alarming, removed the horrible disquiet. I lost two pounds of blood, and more, on this occasion, and find myself still weak and languid ; but, I believe, a little exercise will forward my recovery ; and therefore I am resolved to set out to-morrow for York, in my way to Scarborough ; where I propose to brace up my fibres by sea-bathing, which, I know, is one of your favourite specifics. There is, however, one disease, for which you have found as yet no specific ; and that is old age, of which this tedious unconnected epistle is an infallible symptom: *what, therefore, cannot be cured, must be endured*, by you, as well as by your's,

Harrowgate, June 26.

Matt. Bramble.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.



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